

King Conservation District Scoping Document Program of Work 2015

Overview

Throughout the second and third quarters of 2013, KCD co-convened with King County a roundtable of local elected officials, senior staff, and rural landowners to examine the natural resource challenges facing our region and the ways in which the conservation approach could best support our one-of-a-kind regional mix of stakeholder needs and challenges. Named the *King Conversation District and King County Conservation Panel and Task Force*, the roundtable developed into a uniquely collaborative and productive process, ultimately resulting in a set of recommendations aimed at resolving historical concerns about KCD's operations and exploring new or expanded programs KCD's partners believed would have broad and effective impact on the neighborhoods and communities that fund and use the King Conservation District.

KCD is grateful to the participants of both the Task Force and the Conservation Panel for their dedication and commitment in addressing our region's most urgent natural resource challenges:

King Conservation District 2014 Advisory Committee

	Member	Alternate
King Conservation District	Bill Knutsen <i>Chair, Board of Supervisors</i>	
	Max Prinsen <i>Board of Supervisors</i>	Dick Ryon <i>Board of Supervisors</i>
King County	John Taylor <i>Assistant Division Director</i>	Joan Lee <i>Section Manager</i> Water & Land Resource Division
	Michael Huddleston <i>Municipal Relations Director</i> King County Council	

City of Seattle	Kathy Minsch <i>Regional Liaison</i> Seattle Public Utilities	Melissa Lawrie City Budget Office
Equity & Social Justice	Becca Fong <i>Director of Environmental Program</i> Seattle Tilth	
City of Bellevue	John Stokes <i>Councilmember</i>	Alison Bennett <i>Policy Advisor</i>
Sound Cities Association	Kate Kruller <i>Councilmember, City of Tukwila</i>	Hank Myers <i>Councilmember, City of Redmond</i>
	Chris Eggen <i>Deputy Mayor, City of Shoreline</i>	Mary Lou Pauly <i>Councilmember, City of Issaquah</i>
	Jim Berger <i>Mayor, City of Carnation</i>	Mary Jane Goss <i>Mayor, City of Lake Forest Park</i>

	Member		Alternate
Landowners	Nancy Hutto <i>Commissioner</i> King County Ag Commission		
	Sandy Miller <i>Commissioner</i> King County Forest Commission		
	Rural	James Haack <i>President</i> Momentum, Inc.	
	Urban	Joan McGilton	Terri Butler <i>Executive Director</i> Sustainable Seattle
Environmental Partners	Valerie Segrest <i>Representative</i> Muckleshoot Tribe		Heather Trim <i>Science & Policy Director</i> Futurewise

Overall, the recommendations focus on two themes:

- 1. Protect and enhance the local food economy through both infrastructure development and direct assistance , as well as protecting the rural and working lands**
- 2. Recognize the tapestry of natural resources that exist within urban boundaries and how it meshes and overlaps with the whole and identify how KCD programs can best support natural resource stewardship across the county by strengthening KCD's capacity to support natural resource stewardship across that tapestry**

All participants of the roundtable emphatically agreed that local food and healthy rural working lands directly contribute to the quality of life in their communities and that every community in the District deserves the opportunity to expand access to both healthy local food and natural resources like trees to all their residents. Building upon the recommendations of the roundtable, KCD is working with its Advisory Committee and ad hoc focus groups of elected officials and other interested parties to develop a more refined response to the recommendations and begin building proposals that would address the highest priorities of its partners and constituents.

Components of a *Preliminary Scoping Document* have been developed by KCD staff with the guidance of KCD's Advisory Committee. It is hoped that the draft *Preliminary Scoping Document* captures the direction of the Conservation Panel/Task Force and moves the dialogue forward toward a final scoping document to be forwarded by the Advisory Committee to the KCD Board and implementation of priority Opportunities. (See attached *Opportunities* white papers developed by the 2013 Conservation Panel and Task Force).

Overview of Current Programs

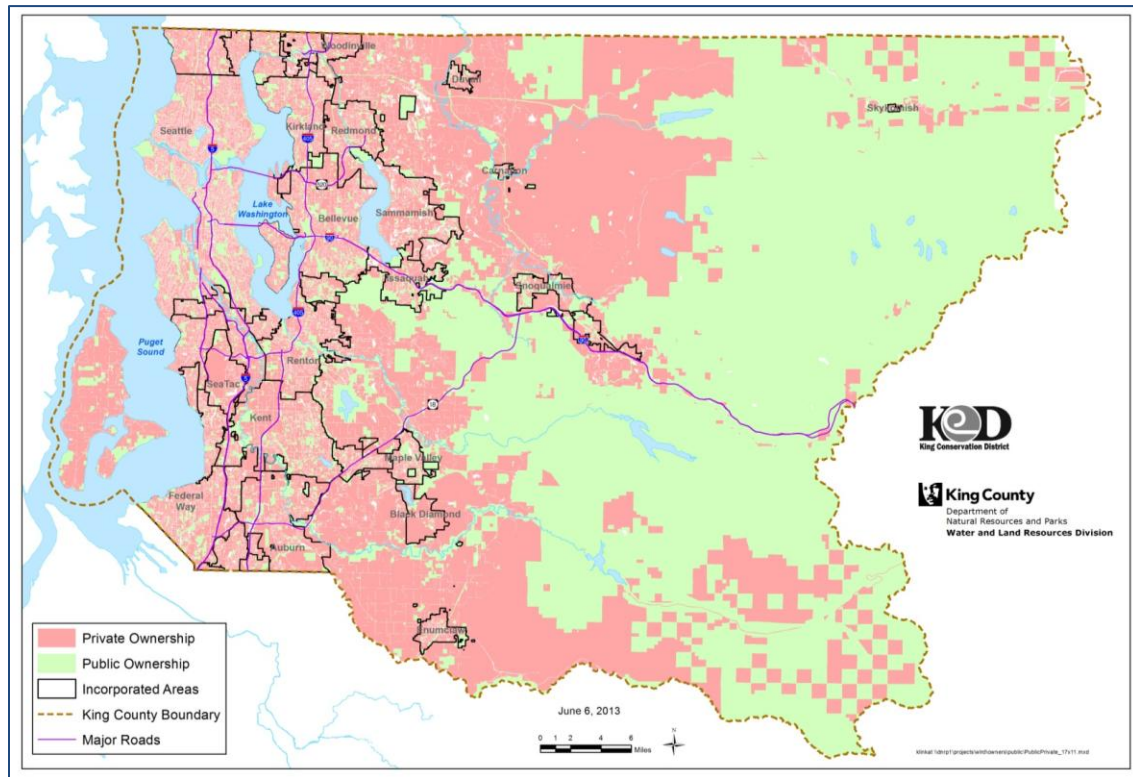
How We Work

The King Conservation District takes an incentive-based approach to stewardship. We provide landowners with technical assistance and incentives to adopt resource conservation practices through a three-pronged approach:

- Education
- Site-specific technical assistance
- Financial incentives, including grants, cost-share, and direct services

Private Lands in King County

There are more than 300,000 parcels in private ownership in King County. The Conservation District's mission is to partner with private citizens to engage in incentive-based programs that complement regulatory principles.



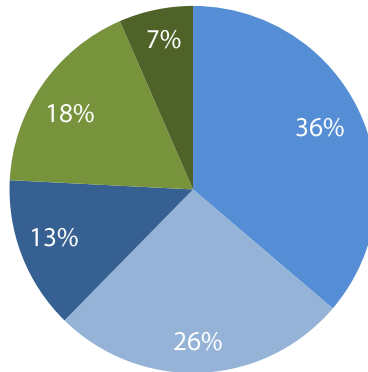
Resource Management Priorities

This section provides a snapshot of the King Conservation District's current resource management priorities and associated program of work along with a 10-year scorecard are summarized.

The King Conservation District's programs and services are organized by the following Resource Management Priorities:

- *Aquatic Habitat (Freshwater & Marine)*
- *Water Quality and Quantity*
- *Forest Health Management & Upland Habitat*
- *Agricultural Lands*
- *Economic Viability of Working Lands*

2013 KCD Budget Allocated by Resource Management Priorities



Aquatic Habitat		36%	\$ 1,376,391
Water Quality & Quantity		26%	\$ 992,152
Forest /Upland Habitat		13%	\$ 511,203
Agricultural Lands		18%	\$ 671,039
Viability of Working Lands		7%	\$ 248,066
			\$ 3,798,851

Ten Year Report Card 2003-2012

Planning and Technical Assistance (including shorelines)	
Number of resource management plans & technical assistance services	1,636
Acres covered by resource management plans and technical assistance	18,469
Practices implemented	3,283
Farmland acreage served with a Conservation Plan	1 In 5 acres

Grant Implementation	
Total grants awarded	561
Total grant funds awarded	\$35,311,405
Dollars leveraged with grant funds (estimated)	\$127,451,896
Dollars cities leverage for each KCD Grant dollar	\$3.60

Education	
Farm tours, classes, workshops	361

Project Implementation	
Dollars leveraged in association with landowner implementation of conservation practices	\$1,926,569
Dollars leveraged by landowners for each dollar of financial assistance for water quality practices	\$2.78
Miles of shoreline enhanced (fresh and marine)	18
Acres of shoreline enhanced (fresh and marine)	196
Percent of shoreline properties receiving direct buffer project assistance.	1.7% fresh 6.4% marine
Percent of District cooperators with aquatic areas helped to install buffers	90%
Number of native plants installed	523,327

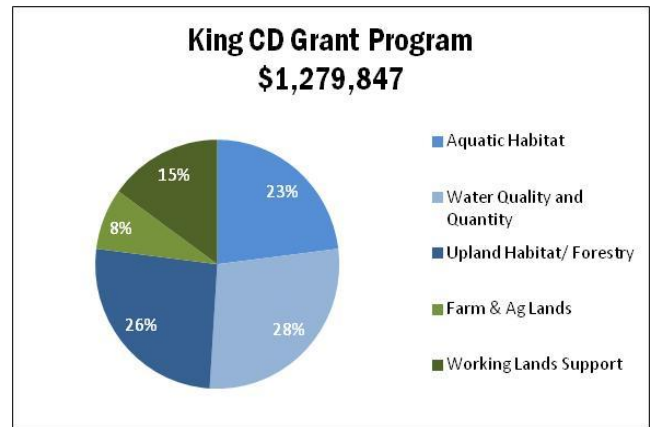
Volunteer / Community Building*	
KCD Volunteers	5,651
Attendance @ tours, classes, workshops	5,077
KCD Volunteer hours	20,610
Dollars leveraged in association with volunteer labor	\$311,664

**These statistics apply to KCD volunteers and do include volunteers, hours, and financial value of volunteers used in member jurisdiction grant projects as the District has not historically requested this information from cities.*

Member Jurisdiction Funding for Natural Resource Stewardship

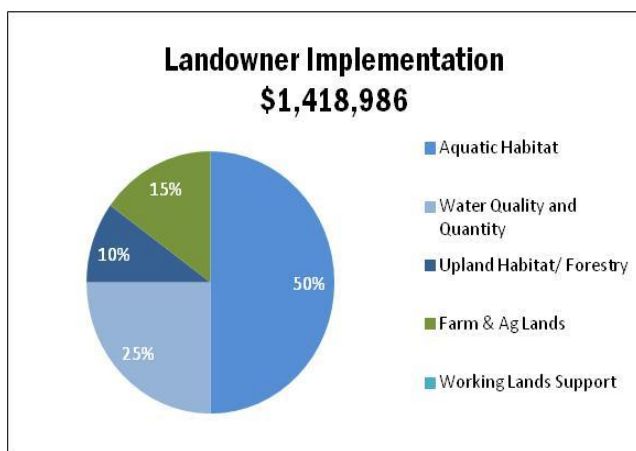
The King Conservation District assists member jurisdictions with meeting their resource conservation goals by offering grants to enhance natural resources, provide education and outreach, and build capacity for project implementation.

Projects funded through the grants program reflect the District's resource management priorities. Examples of recent grants include:



- City of Renton knotweed removal project (partnering with the Friends of the Cedar River Watershed to target weed removal efforts on both public and private lands).
- King Conservation District/Seattle Community Partnership Grant Program, providing funding for projects implemented by both city agencies and nonprofit organizations. A total of 31 applications are currently being reviewed for 2013 funding.
- The City of Bellevue's storm drain stenciling program is working with citizen volunteers to help neighbors take responsibility for the health of city creeks and ultimately Puget Sound.

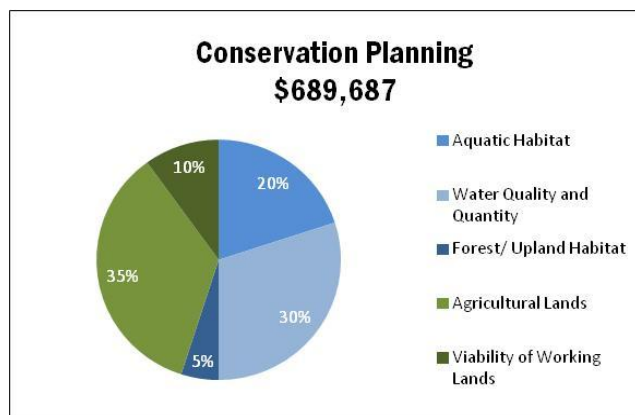
Landowner Implementation



The King Conservation District plans and implements natural resource management projects in partnership with landowners, neighborhood groups, and public entities. The District also provides financial incentives, such as grants and cost-share, to support self-directed landowners with implementation of Best Management Practices that protect and enhance natural resources on their property. Some examples of natural resource management and conservation practices typically supported by the King Conservation District include:

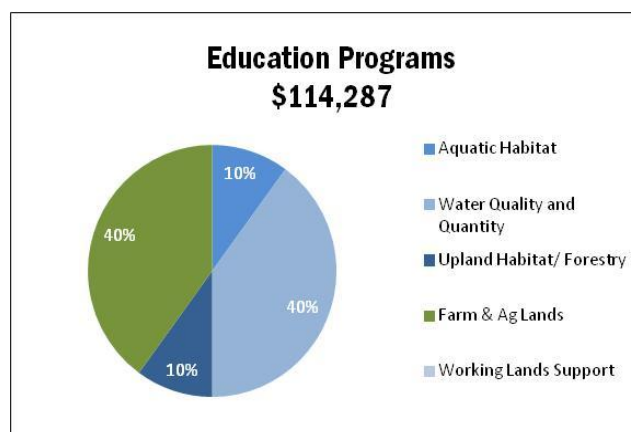
- Aquatic Area Buffer Plantings
- Bulkhead Removal
- Buffer Fencing
- Forest Health Management
- Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
- Stream Crossings
- Pasture & Hay Planting
- Livestock Heavy Use Protection Areas
- Livestock Waste Storage Facilities
- Roof water and surface water quality protection

Resource Planning & Conservation Education for Private Landowners

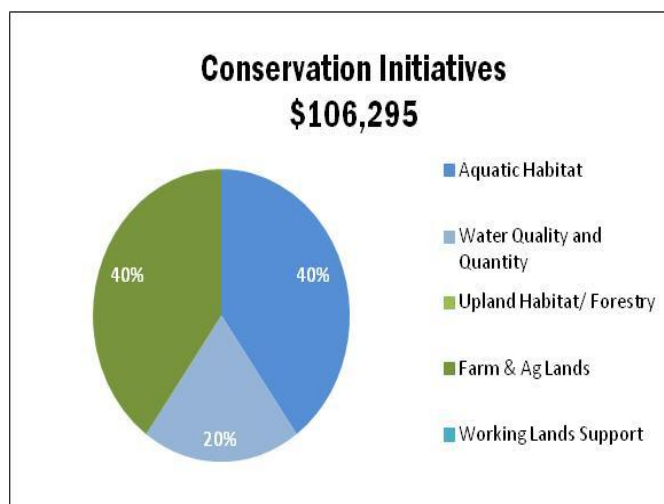


The District provides site-specific, whole property natural resource conservation plans for crop and dairy farms and for horse and livestock owners, with particular focus on livestock impacts on water quality and overall streamside habitat improvement.

In addition to individual property focus, the District sponsors action-oriented workshops, classes, and farm tours, targeting both youth and adults, focused on planning and implementing resource conservation.



Strategic Conservation Initiatives



The King Conservation District's programs are based on the latest research and national standards established by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, as adapted to local needs and regulations. The District works closely with local, state and federal agencies and educational institutions to address complex and challenging issues related to soils, wetlands, and habitat preservation. Each year the District budgets for research on issues that impact land owners and land managers in King County.

Background

The King Conservation District (KCD) is a natural resource conservation organization charged with improving and protecting community sustainability by engaging private landowners to take special care of their land. Like conservation districts across the United States, KCD's formula is a simple one: Funds are collected from all property owners within the boundary of the District and in turn, KCD implements or funds activities that will benefit the people who live in the District. These activities span a broad spectrum of programs and services, but share the common goal of increasing the resilience of our region's natural resources and working lands in the face of population growth, urbanization, and increased pressure from development

The mandate of conservation districts is to encourage and support land owners and managers to take steps to protect and enhance the health of the natural resources important to *their* communities. Conservation districts in Northeastern Washington, for example, serve a distinctly rural and agricultural clientele. Soil health, water conservation, and livestock management rank among the top priorities facing land managers in those districts. Each conservation district, however, is charged with responding uniquely and effectively to the challenges faced by its own community.

KCD is tasked with one of the most interesting, challenging, complex, and multi-faceted opportunities facing any conservation district: To work with landowners in the rural landscape of unincorporated King County and in the backyards, and public easements, parks and open spaces that dot the urban landscapes of the 34 cities we are proud to call our partners. In short, KCD works with landowners to improve soil, water, and habitat conditions wherever it's needed.

Serving such an urban landscape positions KCD to help leverage limited resources for effective regional impact at a time when the financial resources for conservation are dwindling instead of increasing. Now more than ever, collaboration and coordination across agencies, programs, and individuals is needed to ensure that our region's natural resources are resilient and healthy enough to support our growing population.

2015 Program Focus Areas – recommended by the 2013 Conservation Panel/Task Force

After reviewing existing natural resource conservation programs and services in the region and identifying gaps that affect landowners and communities within the District, the Conservation Panel/Task Force recommended six priority areas in which they believed the King Conservation District could either expand current programs and services or develop new programs/services in order to optimally meet the evolving needs and priorities of our stakeholders.

In developing a *Preliminary Scoping Document*, the King Conservation District proposes to organize its activities to meet the challenges and opportunities recommended by the King Conservation District / King County Conservation Panel and Task Force as follows:

- **Rural Small Lot Forestry and Urban Tree Canopy Enhancement**
- **Regional Food System and Sustainable Agriculture**
- **Rural Farm Plans, Technical Assistance, and Regulatory Support**
- **Urban Farm Plans, Technical Assistance and Regulatory Support**
- **Shoreline and Riparian Education and Technical Assistance**
- **Expanded Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)**

Two additional areas identified as priorities are included as programs in this scoping document:

- **Member Jurisdiction Grant Program**
- **Community Relations and Outreach**

The KCD's current and proposed level of service in each of these priority areas is discussed in detail in the following sections. Budget numbers associated with proposed activities are preliminary and will be refined through discussion with the Advisory Committee and other stakeholders.

1. Rural Small Lot Forestry & Urban Tree Canopy Enhancement – Supporting equity across District communities

Challenge: As climate change and population growth pressures mount, the health of Pacific Northwest Forests is increasingly vulnerable.

Need: The demand to train and support owners of small forest properties to safeguard our regional forest resources is immediate and essential. Individual jurisdictions and agencies do not have the resources to adequately protect our forests without mobilizing the private land managers.

Total Proposed Program Budget (new + current) \$319,654

A. Rural Small Lot Forestry and Forest Health Management Services

“The combined impacts of increasing wildfire, insect outbreaks, and tree diseases are already causing widespread tree die-off and are virtually certain to cause additional forest mortality by the 2040s and long-term transformation of forest landscapes.”

- *Climate Change Impacts in the United States – Northwest* May, 2014

Current Outcomes

- **25-40 forested acres treated annually**
- **2,000-3,000 native trees and shrubs planted annually**
- **\$28,986 leveraged annually**

Proposed Future Outcomes

New small forest forestry services and programs are expected increase the number of rural small forest landowners actively managing their forest resources for improved ecosystem services. This work will be supported by funding a minimum of one WSU Coached Forest Stewardship Planning workshop series per year in King County; and working with regional forest health management service providers to market KCD services to forest landowners, to prioritize economic development activities that support small non-commercial forest landowners, and to develop conservation programs that protect small forested stands through coordinated and targeted fuels reduction efforts. Expected outcomes include the following:

- **Forest acres treated and planted increased from 25 to 225 acres annually.**
- **Native trees and shrubs planted on forest land increased from 2,000-3,000 to 18,000-36,000 annually**
- **Private sector funding leveraged on forest health management increased from \$28,986 to 144,900 annually**
- **A minimum of 18 small acreage forest landowners engaged annually in planning and implementing forest health management practices** through KCD technical services and at least 1 WSU Coached Forest Stewardship Workshop per year in King County.
- **Allocate \$150,000 annually in KCD LIP forest health management cost-share funding** for contracts awarded to small acreage non-industrial private forest landowners to implement forest health management practices (an increase from 3 to 10 contracts, and \$60,000 to \$150,000).

Background

The King Conservation District's mission directs it to protect forest resources by reaching out to forest landowners and residents on enhancing ecosystem functions and adding value to forest cover.

As recently as 2009, over 45,000 acres of the nearly 782,000 acres of rural non-commercial forest lands outside the Agriculture Production Districts were held by landowners on parcels of five acres or less in size. These small, non-commercial forested lands exceed the capacity of the King County forestry program for support. Yet together, they represent a vast resource management priority that contributes to the overall health of our environment and community and a timely opportunity to proactively and responsibly engage private landowners in stewardship.

Current Programs and Services

Current KCD rural forest services include technical assistance and limited incentive funding to help rural non-commercial small forest landowners improve the forests on their property by restoring canopy conditions, controlling invasive plant species, improving upland wildlife habitat conditions and connections, and reducing pollutants to water bodies (e.g. pesticides, fertilizers and sediment from eroded soils). Natural resource management objectives for this work include fish and wildlife habitat improvement, storm water run-off management, water quality protection and enhancement, and carbon sequestration. KCD's ongoing activities associated with this work include

- Providing technical site assessment and implementation services to rural small acreage non-commercial forest landowners. **KCD Staff**
- Providing technical site assessment and implementation services to forest landowners who have completed the Washington State University (WSU) Coached Forest Stewardship Planning training. **KCD Staff**

Proposed Additional Programs and Services

Strengthening and expanding the resources available to manage the health of small-lot forest resources in the rural areas has emerged as a high priority regionally. The full range of opportunities identified through a number of stakeholder engagement processes are listed below. With regard to these future additional services and program opportunities, KCD proposes to coordinate with King County to identify the specific programmatic efforts and geographic areas for new and/or expanded investments in unincorporated King County.

The range of opportunities includes:

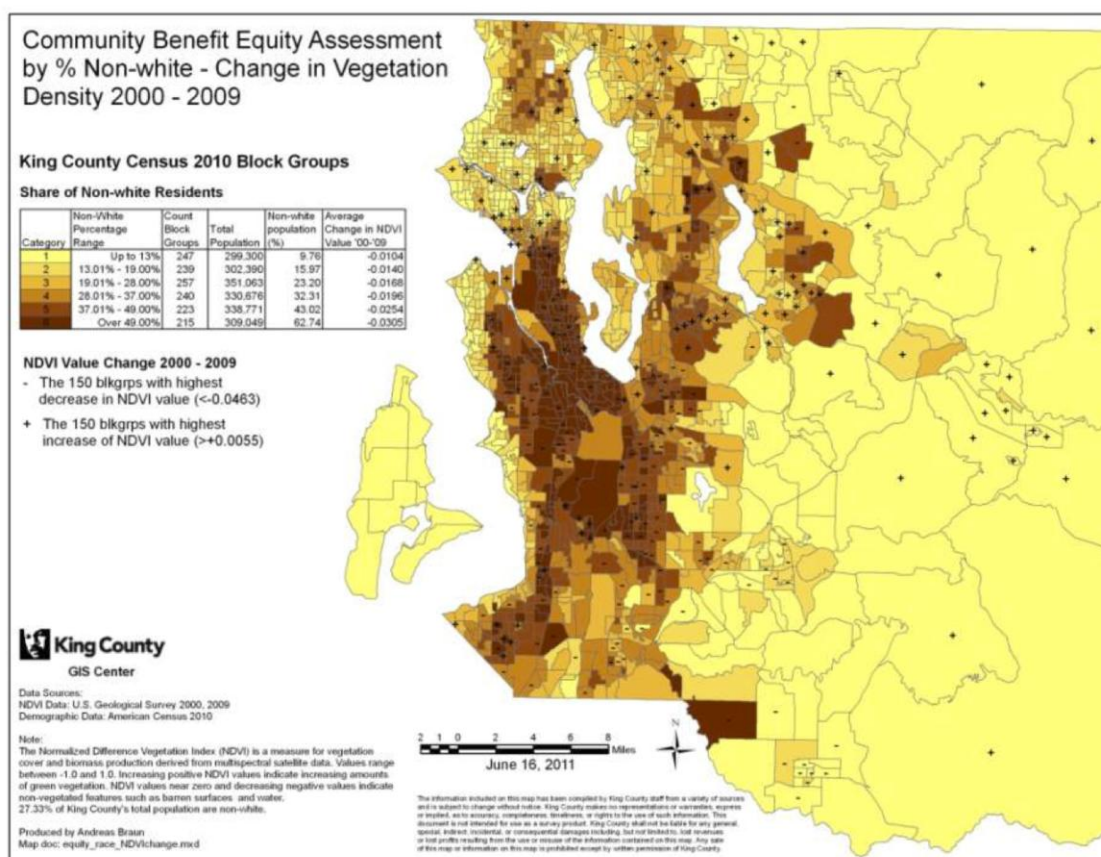
- **Fund the annual offering of WSU Coached Forest Stewardship Workshops** in King County to rural non-commercial small forest landowners. **WSU (Grant or Contract)**
- **Target current and increased technical site assessment and support** services to non-commercial rural forest landowners (under 5 acres). **KCD Staff**
- **Target new technical assistance and implementation services to homeowners associations** with Native Growth Protection Areas, forest buffers and other open space management areas. **KCD Staff**
- **Conduct outreach to rural non-commercial small forest landowners** to directly market the range of forestry services available across agencies in King County. **KCD Staff in partnership with WSU, KC and others**
- **Collaborate with local and regional service providers on enhancing economic development incentives to support small scale forestry** and on conservation programs that help maintain forest health in the urban/rural interface. **KCD Staff in partnership with WSU, KC and others**
- **Collaborate with local and regional service providers on delivering regional fire fuels reduction efforts** to small non-commercial forest landowners. **KCD Staff in partnership with KC and others**
- **Reinstate the KCD Opportunity Fund to capitalize on synergistic opportunities** on properties with combined farm and woodlot land uses (see Regional Food System section of this document). **KCD Staff (Grants to landowners or Partners working with landowners - MJs, NGOs, Agencies)**

[KING COUNTY STAR COMMUNITY RATING PROGRAM REVEALS GROWING DISPARITY IN URBAN CANOPY COVER](#)

Trees form the backbone of the green infrastructure in urban environments. Tree canopy has decreased in low-income parts of the city of Seattle over the past decade. High income neighborhoods have actually experienced an increase in forest canopy. Urban tree canopy contributes to decreased summer temperatures, increased capacity to absorb severe storm events, and habitat for wildlife.

B. Urban Upland Habitat Enhancement and Forest Health Management Services

Healthy trees and forests in urban communities are important for everyone. Recent research by King County reveals an alarming drop in urban trees in many King County communities at a time when more, not fewer, trees in these communities are intensely needed: As growth management concentrates development in urban areas and the regional commitment to social justice and equity is institutionalized, management and enhancement of healthy urban forests and tree canopies emerges as a necessity. Urban forestry programs are expanding their historical focus on aesthetics and the urban heat islands to additionally address functioning wildlife habitats in the cities, stormwater management, water quality protection, pollution abatement and carbon sequestration.



Current Outcomes

- **6 upland acres treated annually**
- **\$14,500 in plants and other project materials provided annually to landowners and neighborhood groups** through KCD technical service programs for implementation of urban forest/open space enhancement projects.
- **\$144,000 leveraged annually** (mostly in-kind labor) in association with urban forest/open space enhancement projects supported by KCD.

Proposed Future Outcomes

Expanded and new urban upland habitat enhancement and forest health management services are expected to introduce or increase the level of urban community-based forestry taking place in King County jurisdictions. Expanded and new services will be supported by hiring a full time Urban Forester and AmeriCorps Intern. These staff will collaborate with three member jurisdictions annually to develop local urban forestry conservation initiatives. Activities will include workshops, classes and tours, and technical support to urban residents on retaining and restoring urban forest resources on private property and public easements, rights-of-way and open space areas. Measures of resource improvement anticipated in association with this expanded and new level of service are based on current measures of success and include the following:

- **Urban forest/upland acres treated and planted increased from 6 to 14 acres annually.**
- **Native trees and shrubs planted on urban forest/upland habitat increased from 14,000 to 34,400 annually**
- **Private sector funding leveraged on urban forest/upland health management increased from \$144,000 to 324,400 annually**
- **Facilitate roundtable fora in three jurisdictions, annually, to develop tailored urban forest retention and restoration initiatives.** In turn, market services and facilitate outreach and educational opportunities to promote the retention and restoration of urban forests, and facilitate community forestry activities through technical support.
- **Work with 3 new jurisdictions annually** in a support and/or coordination role to plan and implement urban forest retention and restoration programs.
- **Allocate \$150,000 annually (\$50,000 per jurisdiction) in KCD LIP cost-share funding for contracts awarded to urban residents and neighborhood and community groups** to implement management practices consistent with urban forest initiatives adopted by the respective jurisdictions.

Background

Current Programs and Services

Current KCD urban forest health management services include technical and project implementation services and limited incentive funding to help residential landowners improve the condition of urban forest resources. Resource management objectives associated with this work include upland wildlife habitat enhancement, storm water runoff management, water quality protection and enhancement, and carbon sequestration. Technical site assessment and implementation services on both private parcels and public parcels adopted by neighborhood groups include:

- addressing the health of individual trees and degraded tree canopy conditions where present,
- improving the cover of native plant species,

- controlling invasive plant species,
- improving upland wildlife habitat conditions on the scale of individual parcels and to some extent the larger landscape, and
- reducing the contribution of pollutants to water bodies.

Proposed Additional Programs and Services

Strengthening and expanding the resources available to help residential property owners and public land managers maintain healthy urban trees and forests is a high regional priority. The opportunities identified through stakeholder engagement are listed below. KCD proposes to coordinate with its member jurisdictions to identify specific synergies, programmatic efforts and geographic areas for new and/or expanded investments in partnership with the jurisdictions.

The range of opportunities includes:

For landowner literacy

- **Provide workshops, classes and tours to urban residents** on improving forest/tree ecosystem functions and values, enhancing wildlife habitat, reducing storm water runoff, and sequestering atmospheric carbon by planting and maintaining native trees and shrubs.

KCD Staff

- **Assist urban residents, through increased levels of technical support,** on retaining and restoring their part of the urban forest, improving urban forest ecosystem functions and values, enhancing wildlife habitat, reducing storm water runoff, and sequestering atmospheric carbon by planting and maintaining native trees and shrubs.

KCD Staff

- **Support and/or coordinate public/private partnerships between private parcels and jurisdictions** on restoring buffers adjacent to public easements, parks and other urban open space areas.

KCD Staff in partnership with MJs

For small & medium-sized jurisdictions

- **Organize and facilitate three round table fora each year to explore the needs, concerns and potential opportunities to partner with jurisdictions on urban forestry initiatives** including monitoring and maintaining healthy tree canopy, developing urban forest retention and restoration strategic plans, and conducting public tree inventories & canopy assessments.

KCD Staff in partnership with MJs

- **Support jurisdiction efforts to improve urban forests** in parks, open space areas, rights of way and on other public properties.

KCD Staff in partnership with MJs

- **Coordinate and/or support jurisdictions applications to Washington Department of Natural Resources for Community and Urban Forestry Grants** to develop urban forest strategic plans, public tree inventories, tree canopy assessments, and to fund public tree planting initiatives.

KCD Staff in partnership with MJs

- **Partner with jurisdictions and local Native American Tribes** on a program that promotes landscaping with native plant species and educates on traditional uses of native plants.

KCD Staff/Tribes

Current	Expanded
<p>10% FTE Senior Resource Specialist <u>4% FTE Resource Specialist II</u></p> <p>Current Funding \$17,430 plus LIP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create 1 FTE Rural Service Forester • Create 1 FTE Urban Services Forester/Arborist/FHM Specialist • Create 1 Americorps Intern • Increase cost-share to LIP for rural FHM projects, and add cost-share for Urban FHM initiatives • Plan and implement practices on 200 rural acres annually • Support 3 new Member Jurisdiction urban forestry initiatives annually <p>New Funding \$302,224</p>

2. Regional Food System and Sustainable Agriculture

Challenge: Every community in King County deserves a strong, resilient, and equitable local food economy but food deserts and other obstacles persist.

Need: With policy development from regional leaders and expertise across a broad diversity of existing grassroots organizations, what is missing is the capacity to track, coordinate, and leverage food system needs and resources efficiently and effectively.

Total Program Budget (new + current) \$1,086,261

Current Outcomes -

- Work regionally to set goals around food and farm marketing and distribution with other regional leaders.
- Auburn International Farmers Market – Development
- Auburn International Farmers Market – Marketing
- Renton Farmers Market - Marketing
- CSA Voucher Program – City of Auburn

Proposed Future Outcomes

Develop a Regional Food System Program in close collaboration with the KCD Advisory Committee, including setting priorities for District-specific projects and grant funding priorities and fund \$900,000 local food projects. KCD proposes to work closely with its partners to provide the coordination of physical and economic infrastructure and market development as well as consumer access to locally-produced food. Program outcomes would include supporting the increase of locally food eaten locally, increasing equitable access to healthy local food, and strengthening the sustainable profitability of local farming. These partners include, but are certainly not limited to:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| • King County | • Pike Place Market |
| • Member Jurisdictions | • Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance |
| • FARMS/CITIES Roundtable | • Seattle Farmers Market Association |
| • Cascade Harvest Coalition | • Washington Farmers Market Association |
| • Seattle Tilth | • Tilth Producers of Washington |
| • NW Agriculture Business Center | • Sno-Valley Tilth |

King County farmers produced \$120 million worth of food in 2012, down from \$127 million in 2007, ranking 18th of the state's 39 counties. King County consumers, however, spend \$6 billion on food, including \$600 million on raw food. Demand for fresh locally-grown food is growing, but social, economic, and infrastructural obstacles stand in the way. Price points for food that deliver a living wage to farmers while remaining affordable to a broad consumer base prove elusive in the absence of some market intervention. Processing and storage facilities are few, creating farm-to-market challenges for small farmers.

Institutional buyers such as hospitals and school districts have not yet embraced local suppliers in a meaningful way.

These obstacles suggest a need for public sector innovation. Though local food stories are ubiquitous and celebrated chefs increasingly highlight sustainability and seasonality in their menus and preparation, the fact remains that farmers are, paradoxically, simply not sharing in the renaissance. The most recent survey of King County farmers found that incomes in the sector are declining.

The King Conservation District is uniquely positioned to coordinate and leverage a range of projects, programs, and services we and our partners are already well-equipped to deploy.

The Future

We propose to work with our member jurisdictions, King County, Seattle Tilth, Cascade Harvest Coalition, Pike Place Market, the Puget Sound Regional Food Council, and others across the food system spectrum to reduce obstacles on the farm, during processing and storage, within distribution channels, and at market. We will build on existing success, such as Seattle Tilth's Farm Works in Auburn, and work together to innovate new pilot programs to learn from and adapt.

"By addressing food system issues systematically, the region can protect agricultural land, promote fresh food consumption, and support local food and farm based business to improve the health of the local food economy."
 - Puget Sound Regional Council -
VISION 2040

Current Program Outcomes	Proposed Program Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently, KCD is involved in a variety of regional roundtables and policy bodies examining ways to grow and maintain a sustainable agricultural economy. KCD is partnering with the City of Auburn, Auburn International Farmers Market, Seattle Tilth, Auburn Food Bank, and Washington CAN to implement Good Food Bag Market Bucks for low-income shoppers to use at the Farmers Market this summer. This program will expand markets for local farmers by increasing their consumer base and expand access to healthy, locally-grown produce to low-income community members. 	<p>KCD proposes to develop and administer a robust program of grants and services that address the following regional goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve food access Invest in local food system as an economic growth sector Begin to address storage and processing obstacles Strengthen direct market connections at farmers markets Expand CSAs <p>A healthy local food system means healthier people, healthier farms, and healthier natural resources.</p>

The range of opportunities includes (proposed lead in **blue**):

- ❑ **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Collaborate with local agriculture sector to design a set of economic development solutions and systems for the food producers** **KCD Staff**
- ❑ **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Support pilot projects to address complex farming challenges**, such as new farmers markets, new farmer recruitment, innovative pilot projects to improve food access, etc. **MJs/NGOs**
- ❑ **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Providing catalyst funding and support to help cities** connect to and strengthen regional farm and food economy. **MJs/NGOs**
- ❑ **REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING: Invest in building the capacity of partner public and non-profit organizations that are connecting new farmers to land**, providing technical assistance and conducting applied research to strengthen the local farm economy. (Cascade Harvest Coalition, WSU Extension Service, Northwest Agricultural Business Center, Seattle Tilth, and more) **Agencies/NGOs**
- ❑ **REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING: Stabilize (and, if possible, expand) funding for organizations that are demonstrating success in developing farm to institution programs.** **NGOs**

- **DIRECT MARKETING: Support market expansion efforts for CSAs** with institutional buyers and or through CSA fair to bring in new customers. **KCD Staff/NGOs**
- **DIRECT MARKETING: Support efforts to build and reinforce direct market channels** including CSA/vouchers/farmers' markets/neighborhood food coops. **MJs/NGOs**
- **DIRECT MARKETING Support cities, farmers, and market managers to identify and secure capital for infrastructure of farmers' markets** to enable them to continue to expand and play a more active role in nutrition education. **MJs/NGOs/Agencies**
- **EQUITY/ACCESS: Increase support for strategies to empower low-income families** and individuals to have access to healthy local foods. **MJs/NGOs/Agencies**
- **WHOLESALE: Work with farmers to identify needs for, plan, and locate infrastructure for aggregation and storage** **KCD/KC**
- **WHOLESALE: support development and/or expansion of local food hubs** **KCD/KC/MJs/NGOs**

Background

Strengthening the regional food economy was perhaps the most discussed and ultimately the highest priority of the Conservation Panel and Task Force. This focus area addresses enhancing the Regional Food System through a combination of initiatives and synergy with existing or expanded KCD services. These other KCD services are addressed in the Urban and Rural Farmer focus areas which follows this section.

Current Programs

The current Conservation District/ Member Jurisdiction Grant Program has funded some local food access-related projects in recent years, such as farmers market support with the City of Auburn. In 2014, KCD has been more actively exploring how cities can use this current Grant program to pilot some small food initiative projects, such as Farmer's Market food stamp program support, CSA boxes for healthy food access, and farmer's market support. In addition, KCD staff works regionally to support food system initiatives, such as the recent Farm and Food Roundtable project led jointly by Pike Place Market, Seattle, and King County; KCD is also committed to working with member jurisdictions to explore shared interests in supporting the regional food system within the current grant program.

The Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) Regional Food Policy Council has called for a systems change that would increase equitable access to healthy foods in the Puget Sound region. They point to the interdependence and linkage between the rural and urban economies as a factor in this system. The Council identifies challenges to local communities such as access to healthy food, preserving agricultural resources, and ensuring resiliency in the food system during emergencies. King County FARMS Report states that viable local agriculture needs regional funding support.

Since the Task Force and Conservation Panel came to a close in 2013, the KCD team has been actively engaged with partner jurisdictions, citizen groups, regional food system leaders, and farmers to explore this opportunity area better and develop a strong understanding of the regional needs and potential role for KCD to play in this priority area.

Current	Expanded
0.1 FTE Senior Program Manager 0.1 FTE Community Relations Manager <u>Contracted Community Outreach</u>	Add 1 FTE Senior Program Manager Add 1 FTE Grant Program Assistant Create \$900,000 Grants, Contracts, Funding <u>Support to KC, MJs, NGOs</u>
Current Funding \$20,880	New Funding \$1,075,620

3. Rural Farm plans, technical assistance, and regulatory support

Challenge: Best Management Practices to reduce non-point impacts from multiple land uses need continuous updates to protect water quality, a shared public resource. A resilient future depends upon farmers stewarding our shared resources in the public benefit while remaining economically healthy themselves.

Need: Farmers continue to need help understanding and navigating complex and changing rules, guidelines, and conditions such as salmon recovery, field drainage, water rights, soil health, extreme weather events, and farm development restrictions.

“While the agriculture sector’s technical ability to adapt to changing conditions can offset some adverse impacts of a changing climate, there remain critical concerns for agriculture with respect to costs of adaptation, development of more climate resilient technologies and management, and availability of timing of water.”

Climate Change Impacts in the United States *May, 2014*

Total Program Budget (new + current) \$725,814

Current Outcomes

Current natural resource planning services focus primarily on rural small farm managers. At current program funding, the key outcomes include:

- **Serving 150 farming customers** (90% result in site visits to assess natural resource concerns and solutions)
- **Delivering 67 farm plans for 1000+ acres** (20% regulatory referral; 25% Current Use/ PBRs referral; 55% stewardship only)
- **Following up on 160 plans** to document implementation, which includes support navigating County, State, and Federal permitting systems

- **Providing technical support to dairy operators** and the Washington State Dairy Association (WSDA) in association with WSDA nutrient management compliance inspections. About 15 inspections per year
- **Assisting 30 farms with manure spreader loan program annually**, promoting the beneficial use of manure as a fertilizer at agronomic rates, minimizing water quality impacts of stock piling manure.

KCD COST-SHARE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE HELPS

KEEP DAIRIES IN KING COUNTY

In 1991, 83 dairies existed in King County; today there are just 26. The cost of meeting increased environmental regulations, as well as addressing seasonal flooding, has proven prohibitive for the majority of dairies that once dotted the landscape. In early 2014, KCD approved financial assistance for one dairy to construct infrastructure improvements that will keep dairy cattle dry and productive in the wet winter months and protect water quality in the Snoqualmie Valley.

Proposed Future Outcomes

- **Develop a multi-year plan to deploy targeted farm planning services approach county wide to key targeted natural resource concern areas** for example PIC approach-targeting water quality impaired sub-basins with significant commercial farming land use (5 -10 watersheds prioritized; may result in 10+ year plan)
KCD Staff
- **Targeting 1 natural resource concern area for outreach each 2 years**, ensuring a comprehensive approach to conservation
KCD Staff
- **Serving 50 farming customers in targeted natural resource areas** (90% result in site visits to assess natural resource concerns and solutions) annually
KCD Staff
- **Delivering 20 farm plans in targeted natural resource areas** (25% regulatory nexus; 10% Current/PBRS nexus; 65% stewardship nexus only) annually
KCD Staff

Background

Current Programs

In addition to stewarding many of the public's water resources, farmers are emerging as critical allies in halting or reversing the impacts of climate change. Climate change studies point to the importance of soils as a key bank for carbon, which can mitigate some of the projected impacts of climate change projections. This focus on soil health and farm soils builds on nearly a century of soil conservation focus in the US, so visibly brought to mind with images of the dust bowl in the past and the tragic land slide at Oso only months ago.

The King Conservation District Planning staff engages farmers, landowners, and others to promote and support implementation of conservation practices and plans that address natural resource concerns.

For landowners seeking to put conservation practices on the ground, our planning programs are often the first step. After working with KCD to develop their conservation plan, some landowners are able to get the work done on their own, while many landowners continue working with the District's implementation staff to accomplish identified tasks.

For the landowner, implementing their conservation plan is a multi-year effort, commonly taking three years to complete planned conservation practices. For many, the available funding and time can limit what they can actually accomplish. Our follow-up assistance seeks to increase conservation actions taken, and many landowners go on to work with our Implementation programs, such as the Conservation Projects and Landowner Incentive Program. Many of our outstanding cooperators also go on to host peer education farm tours as part of our Education program.

Proposed Additional Programs

The 2013 Task Force and Conservation Panel identified the need to expand KCD support of small farmers with increased planning capacity, more on-the-ground natural resource conservation projects, and assistance in navigating County, State, and Federal regulations by marketing services to priority farming sectors and/or resource priority areas. Priority sectors or geographic areas could be identified using regional plans from groups such as Puget Sound Partnership, Regional Food Policy Council, Department of Ecology TMDLs, and other relevant bodies. The selection of priority areas would be coordinated with input from the KCD Advisory Committee.

Over the past 10 years, KCD has seen a steady level of farm services requests, even without any active marketing for these services. Expanded capacity to support small farmers would improve KCD's ability to assist landowners to balance regulatory compliance with cost-effective land management practices. As regulatory requirements change and increase, more landowners are referred to KCD for assistance in coming into compliance with Federal, State and local regulations. In unincorporated King County, KCD works closely with County staff to coordinate outcomes and help private landowners steward their

property in the public interest. Part of the planning process is addressing regulatory requirements in ways that work for both the landowner and regulatory agencies.

Current	Expanded
0.77 FTE Senior Program Manager 0.93 FTE Senior Resource Specialist 1.55 FTE Resource Specialist II 1.36 Program Assistant <u>0.75 AmeriCorps Intern (Education)</u>	Add 1 new FTE Resource Specialist (Rural Farm Planner) <u>Add .6 FTE Outreach Specialist</u>
Current Funding \$571,885	New Funding \$153,929

4. Urban farm plans, technical assistance, and regulatory support

Challenge: An equitable local food economy includes urban food production, both commercial and personal. Urban farmers and gardeners have unique needs for land stewardship guidance to ensure a viable, diverse local food system that cares for our soils and waters for future generations.

Need: Existing urban agricultural organizations are under-funded to meet the demand to develop sustainable urban small-lot food production and provide training and support for low-income and immigrant populations, who would benefit most from expanded urban agricultural opportunities.

Total Program Budget (new + current) \$191,800

Current Outcomes

Interest in small scale food production is growing within the urban boundaries of the district. In such close quarters, the need for good planning and management is clear. King Conservation District Planning staff services have been limited in serving urban farming. Current services are focused on water quality impacts from small-scale livestock management and also associated with soil testing support to farmers and gardeners.

“1 in 5 children in King County is food insecure.”

- Communities Count, 2012

Proposed Future Outcomes

- **Assess regional need for urban farming-related natural resource planning support** through coordination with member jurisdictions and the KCD Advisory Committee

KCD Staff

- **Continue to market and expand soil fertility services** to promote responsible fertilizer practices (Increase gardener involvement by at least 100 more new gardeners annually) **KCD Staff**

- **Coordinate urban farm planning services with coordinated regional food system initiatives** with member cities and county **KCD Staff**

- **Develop soil testing program and customers into a more comprehensive urban conservation program** focused on growing healthy local food and protecting and enhancing urban water quality **KCD Staff**

- **Develop 20 Urban Farm Plans per year.** Plans will be developed across the District so that by year 5, at least 1-2 urban farm plans will be developed in every member jurisdiction. **KCD Staff**

[SEATTLE TILTH – GROWING SELF-SUFFICIENCY AMONG IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES IN RAINIER BEACH WITH 7 ACRES OF MARKET GARDEN AND WETLAND.](#)

Farms can grow almost anywhere; the most critical resource is farmers! Along with other partners, including the City of Seattle and Cedar Grove, KCD is supporting the ongoing development of a market garden in Rainier Beach. Programs at the 7-acre Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands train young farmers, support low-income immigrant populations, and include significant habitat enhancements that benefit the broader community.

Background

KCD currently works with landowners in all settings. While it is not KCD's mission to help farmers farm, KCD is interested in promoting and expanding healthy, sustainable farms wherever they make sense as they provide optimal stewardship of soil, water, and habitat while also supporting the local food economy in any way possible. KCD could provide education, technical assistance, and institutional support to municipalities, landowners, and managers to ensure urban farms are sustainable and operated in the public benefit, including promoting water quality BMPs and building soil health/ carbon sequestration.

KCD has experience working with landowners, including many that have been referred by regulatory agencies. Part of the planning process is addressing regulatory requirements in ways that work for both

the landowner and the regulatory agencies. With that coordination established, KCD is well-positioned to develop similar relationships with municipalities interested in promoting and supporting urban farming.

KCD is currently engaged with area cities in several, regional food system initiatives focused on building strategies that increase the number of new farmers entering the field, both in cities and rural areas. This includes the efforts of a number of cities to adapt policies that enable and encourage urban farming. Cities are also considering supporting this effort through land leases, water subsidies, and other mechanisms, and other low-investment strategies. At the same time KCD could work with municipalities and landowners to incorporate natural resource conservation practices into urban farming to build and maintain soil and water sustainability. WSU Extension could also partner in this effort as they bring the “how to” to the urban farming equation. Several years ago, funding for local WSU extension agents were zeroed out of the county budgets. Bringing sustained funding back to a WSU agriculture agent (see Regional Food Systems Focus Area) could greatly enhance the technical support available to beginning urban farmers.

Current Programs

With current programs and funding, KCD delivers the following urban farmer/ gardener services:

- **Serves up to 5 urban farm service customers** annually
- **Delivers 1-5 urban livestock-related farm plans annually** (for regulatory compliance)
- **Participates in regional food system** coordination initiatives (as available)
- **Provides soil testing support** to over 500 new urban farmer/ gardeners annually to promote sound water quality related soil fertility management (this service has been growing steadily since starting in 2007)

Proposed Additional Programs

The 2013 Task Force and Conservation Panel identified a need for KCD to focus expertise in natural resource stewardship to support expansion of urban farming in sustainable ways within urban boundaries. Recommendations were that KCD's existing programs and services for small farmers be more aggressively implemented within urban boundaries.

“Support efforts to expand urban food production on privately owned land, including residential, commercial, and institutional properties.”

-Seattle Food Action Plan, 2008

Current	Expanded
0.05 FTE Program Assistant <u>\$10,050 Soil Testing Expenses</u>	Add 1 new FTE Resource Specialist (rural farm planner) <u>Add .6 Outreach Specialist</u>
Current Funding \$13,871	New Funding \$177,929

5. Shoreline and Riparian Habitat (Freshwater & Marine) – Support for shoreline landowners in protecting Puget Sound

Challenge: Efforts to restore the health of Puget Sound need the participation of private landowners who collectively own 2/3 of the shorelines. Landowner driven protection of our region's streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands and marine shorelines will contribute to salmon runs and the overall health of Puget Sound.

Need: Individual jurisdictions and agencies do not have the resources to recover the health of aquatic systems without mobilizing private land managers. The demand for workshops, classes, tours, train-the-trainer, and one-on-one assistance is immediate and essential.

Total Program Budget (new + current) \$1,278,586

Current Outcomes

- **1.82 miles of shoreline replanted and enhanced** annually.
- **23.5 acres of riparian corridor replanted and enhanced** annually.
- **57,589 native trees and shrubs planted annually**
- **549 landowners, neighborhood groups and jurisdictions utilizing KCD technical service programs annually** for implementation of aquatic area planting and enhancement practices.
- **1 KCD LIP cost-share contract awarded annually to landowners, neighborhood groups and jurisdictions** for implementation of aquatic area planting and enhancement practices.

Proposed Future Outcomes

Expanded and new shoreline and riparian habitat services are expected to significantly increase the current level of technical services and community engagement in support of freshwater and marine shoreline protection and enhancement objectives along creeks, streams, rivers, lakes and Puget Sound, and in wetlands and estuaries. Expanded and new services will be supported by coordinating workshops and other educational opportunities to engage landowners in restoration activities; conduct site visits, prepare and implement enhancement/restoration plans for rural and urban shoreline landowners, community/neighborhood groups adopting publicly owned shoreline areas and groups working to protect and restore basin-level functions and values. Expanded and new services will be targeted and coordinated in partnership with member jurisdictions to address individual member jurisdictions priority geographic areas. Resource improvements anticipated in association with expanded and new service are based on current measures of success (10 year score card) and include the following outcomes:

“The conservation and management of freshwater ecosystems are critical to the interests of all humans, nations, and governments.”

The Freshwater Institute, University of Washington, 2014

- **3.6 miles of shoreline replanted and enhanced** annually.
- **47 acres of riparian corridor replanted and enhanced** annually.
- **115,100 native trees and shrubs planted annually**
- **A minimum of 220 freshwater aquatic area landowners engaged annually in learning about, planning and implementing aquatic area planting and enhancement practices.** Aquatic area landowners will be engaged by increasing from 2 to 10 the number of workshops on protecting and enhancing freshwater aquatic resources. Of these, 8 workshops will be marketed regionally to urban KC residents (NE, NW, SE and SW King County) and workshops will be facilitated twice per year in each geographic quadrant.
- **A minimum of 120 marine shoreline aquatic area landowners engaged annually in learning about, planning and implementing aquatic area planting and enhancement practices.** Marine

shoreline landowners will be engaged by increasing from 3 to 6 the number of workshops on protecting and enhancing marine aquatic resources. The workshops will be directly marketed to marine shoreline landowners through targeted outreach, and facilitated in locations accessible to Vashon, NW King and SW King residents.

- **Increase from 10 to 20 the number of freshwater aquatic area planting and enhancement projects** planned and implemented by KCD, thereby restoring a minimum of 5 acres and 1.8 miles per year on a combination of urban and rural residential lands. In association with this work, leverage additional Washington State Conservation Commission funding for project implementation.
- **Increase from 4 to 8 the number of Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program projects** planned and implemented per year, thereby restoring a minimum of 6 acres and 1.5 miles per year on agricultural lands. In association with this work, leverage additional Washington State Conservation Commission funding and USDA Farm Services Agency funding for project implementation.
- **Allocate \$112,500 annually in KCD LIP cost-share funding for contracts awarded to freshwater and marine aquatic area landowners** to implement freshwater and marine shoreline planting and enhancement practices in urban and rural areas (an increase from 1 to 10 contracts, and \$11,250 to \$112,500).

“In the coastal zone, the effects of sea level rise, erosion, inundation, threats to infrastructure and habitat, and increasing ocean acidity collectively pose a major threat to the region.”

Climate Change Impacts in the United States, May 2014

Background

King Conservation District engaged roundtable participants in an exploration of the challenges facing aquatic habitats in the District. King County's landscape is a diverse mosaic of mountains, forests, rivers, lakes, and marine habitats. The district's service area includes approximately 2,100 square miles of land, plus nearly 2,000 miles of freshwater and marine shorelines. Major watersheds include Cedar River-Lake Washington, Green-Duwamish, Sammamish, Snoqualmie-Skykomish, White River, and Central Puget Sound, including Vashon-Maury Island.

A century of intensive logging, agriculture and urban development have degraded aquatic habitats throughout King County where more than 2/3 of the shoreline properties are

Monday, July 21, 2014

SHORELINE WORKSHOPS BUILD AWARENESS,

LEAD TO RESTORATION OF PUGET SOUND BLUFFS

One landowner's participation in a KCD workshop led to a kitchen table discussion with neighbors and a multi-parcel bluff habitat enhancement for shorebirds and other Puget Sound wildlife. Another landowner's participation in the same KCD workshop led to a creosote piling bulkhead removal project.

held in private ownership. In 1999, Chinook salmon were listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, prompting concerted efforts to restore and protect lakes, rivers and streams. Concern for the health of Puget Sound has focused increased attention on shoreline and nearshore habitats. Working closely with private property owners whose lands abut freshwater and marine aquatic systems is an essential component of recovering the health of these systems. Support for increased educational assistance and capacity-building among shoreline property owners was recommended by the roundtable.

Current Programs and Services

KCD currently supports shoreline property owners in implementing enhancement and restoration activities through targeted education, direct technical assistance, and financial incentives in the form of direct project planning and implementation services as well as grants and cost share. Over the past decade, the KCD has provided direct assistance on enhancing more than 8% of King County freshwater and marine shorelines.

The goal of KCD shoreline and riparian habitat support services is to improve the condition of freshwater and marine aquatic resources. This objective is met by engaging landowners and land managers in improving the cover of native plant species, controlling invasive plant species, improving riparian and aquatic habitat conditions on the scale of individual parcels and to some extent the larger landscape, and reducing the contribution of pollutants to water bodies (e.g. pesticides, fertilizers, nutrients, bacteria, etc). Resource management objectives associated with this work include fish and wildlife habitat enhancement, water quality protection and enhancement, and carbon sequestration. In addition, shoreline property owners need assistance in navigating regulations, understanding the ways in which their actions impact our shared aquatic resources, and paths they can take to improve the sustainability of our waters and related aquatic habitats. KCD's ongoing activities associated with this work include:

- **Conducting shoreline education programming** to promote stable natural shorelines that protect water quality, provide high value fish and wildlife habitat, reduce storm water runoff, and sequester carbon.

KCD Staff

- **Providing technical site assessment and enhancement/restoration project implementation services to residential property owners.** Typical implementation services in a rural context include supporting and/or planning and implementing riparian corridor enhancement projects consistent with MKCC Code and in an urban context include supporting and/or planning and implementing riparian corridor enhancement to whatever extent is practicable. In cases where funding is available, services include improvement of in-stream habitat conditions.

KCD Staff

- **Providing technical site assessment and implementation services to neighborhood groups adopting aquatic areas on public properties.** Typical services to neighborhood groups include actions to address degraded riparian conditions, control invasive/weed species, improve fish and wildlife habitat connectivity and conditions, and reduce the contribution of pollutants to water bodies (e.g. pesticides, fertilizers, nutrients from animal waste, and sediment from eroded soils). In cases where funding is available, in-stream habitat conditions are improved.

KCD Staff

- **Providing technical site assessment and implementation services to member jurisdictions.** Technical services are made available to and coordinated with member jurisdictions to improve freshwater and marine shoreline habitat in parks and on other public properties. These efforts are implemented in the form of contracted service.

KCD Staff

Proposed Additional Programs and Services

In response to the priorities identified by our partners, KCD proposes to strengthen its existing shoreline and riparian habitat programs by increasing capacity for workshops, classes, and tours to freshwater and marine shoreline property owners; increasing capacity for one-on-one technical assistance and implementation services to property owners on improving the functions and values, fish and wildlife habitat and water quality of marine and freshwater shorelines; increasing capacity to respond to member jurisdiction requests for support on improving the functions and values of fish and wildlife habitat and water quality of marine and freshwater shorelines on public lands. With regard to the future additional services and program opportunities listed below, KCD proposes to coordinate with its member jurisdictions to identify specific synergies, programmatic effort and geographic areas for new and/or expanded investments in partnership with the jurisdictions.

The range of opportunities includes:

For landowner literacy

- **Provide assistance to landowners and residents in communities that are currently underserved** or are disproportionately affected by pollution, including toxics and sedimentation, or habitat degradation.

KCD in Partnership with MJs/NGOs

For jurisdictions

- **Increase capacity to help jurisdictions meet their aquatic resource protection and enhancement objectives through education, technical support and implementation services to landowners and neighborhood/community groups.** Efforts in this area could include any combination of outreach, education and technical services targeted by priority geographic area ranging from individual landowners in proximity to public properties to priority watersheds or sub-basins. The range of services to jurisdictions could include community organizing, project planning, and implementation services.

KCD in Partnership with MJs/NGOs

- **Support jurisdiction efforts to improve freshwater and marine shoreline habitat in parks and on other public properties.** These efforts, currently offered as a contracted service, could be increased. Jurisdiction investments could be augmented by working with landowners of adjacent private holdings.

KCD in Partnership with MJs/NGOs

- **Support jurisdiction efforts in** targeted shoreline outreach, education and technical services that promote and support enhanced shoreline buffers and reduced pollutants in surface water runoff.

KCD in Partnership with MJs/NGOs

Current

0.81 FTE Senior Program Manager
 1 FTE Engineer
 2 FTE Senior Resource Specialists
 1 FTE Resource Specialist II
 0.21 FTE Resource Specialist I
 1 WA Conservation Corps Crew
0.25 AmeriCorps Intern (Education)

Current Funding \$674,594

Expanded

Add 1 FTE Resource Specialist
 Add 1 FTE AmeriCorps Intern
 Add 1 FTE Education Program Manager
 Add 1 FTE WA Conservation Corp Crew
 Increase by more than 100% Workshops, Tours and Classes to freshwater and marine shoreline landowners
 Increase by 100% aquatic area enhancement projects on private property
Add \$101,250 to KCD LIP cost-share funding

New Funding \$603,992

6. Expanded Landowner Incentive Program – Cost-share to meet natural resource management priorities in our region *(This section represents the portion of implementation services associated with the other five opportunity areas that is financed through cost-share contracts with landowners.)*

Challenge: Private landowners own nearly 50% of the land within the boundary of the King Conservation District. Engaging the private landowners in natural resource protection and enhancement is critical to supporting an economically and environmentally sustainable region.

Need: Private landowners need support to meet the region’s expectation that common resources on private property, such as water quality and fish and wildlife habitat, be protected and enhanced for public benefit.

Total Program Budget (new + current) \$837,182

Current Outcomes

- **1.8 miles of shoreline enhanced** since inception.
- **11.5 acres of riparian corridor enhanced** since inception.
- **141.5 acres of forest in active forest health management** since inception.
- **190 landowners engaged in stewardship practice implementation** since inception.
- **256 cost-share contracts awarded** since inception.

Proposed Future Outcomes

- **Allocate \$150,000 annually in KCD LIP forest health management cost-share funding for contracts awarded to small acreage non-industrial private forest landowners** to implemented forest health management practices (an increase from 3 to 10 contracts, and \$60,000 to \$150,000).

- **Allocate \$150,000 annually (\$50,000 per jurisdiction) in KCD LIP cost-share funding for contracts awarded to urban residents and neighborhood and community groups** to implement management practices consistent with urban forest initiatives adopted by the respective jurisdictions (an increase from 1 to 15 contracts, and \$11,250 to \$150,000).
- **Allocate \$112,500 annually in KCD LIP cost-share funding for contracts awarded to freshwater and marine aquatic area landowners** to implement freshwater and marine shoreline planting and enhancement practices in urban and rural areas (an increase from 1 to 10 contracts, and \$11,250 to \$112,500).
- **Allocate \$250,000 annually in KCD LIP cost-share funding for contracts awarded to agricultural** landowners to implement agricultural related water quality protection and enhancement practices, agriculture land drainage ditch maintenance practices, water conserving irrigation practices, and other practices that improve resource management and protections on agriculture lands (an increase from 24 to 40 contracts, and \$150,000 to \$250,000).

SHORELINE AND LIP WORK TOGETHER TO
IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

KCD has been cooperatively restoring the Brandon Street Natural Area with the Seattle Parks Department for many years. One adjacent landowner, seeing the results of work being done, sought and received both technical assistance through the KCD aquatic area enhancement program and funds through the KCD Landowner Incentive Program to install a native plant buffer on their portion of Longfellow Creek. This backyard riparian habitat enhancement project has expanded the total area of Longfellow Creek that has been enhanced with native plants and is contributing to improved water quality conditions in the water body.

Background

The King Conservation District traditionally works with private property owners in all settings to assist them in protecting, conserving and enhancing natural resources. The KCD Landowner Incentive Program promotes stewardship of natural resources by providing funding in the form of cost-share awards to support landowner implementation of natural resource management practices. Cost-share awards are a common financial incentive tool utilized by entities seeking to promote behavior change through the adoption of emerging and/or current priority management practice. Examples include the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service *Farm Bill* conservation programs and public health department septic system upgrade programs. Cost-share awards through these programs are contractual arrangements between the funding entity and the recipient landowner. Such contracts typically specify an approved activity with implementation criteria, a reimbursement amount or ratio, and in some cases performance measures.

Current Programs

The KCD Landowner Incentive Program funds natural resource management practices planned in association with KCD technical service programs such as the Farm Planning Program and the Aquatic Area Enhancement Program. While the practices funded through the LIP are planned by the KCD, the recipient landowner is responsible for ensuring the practice is implemented consistent with planned standards. Currently, fourteen individual practices are eligible for funding to address a range of resource management priorities, including 1) aquatic habitat protection and enhancement (*Aquatic Area Buffer Planting, Bulkhead Removal, Livestock Exclusion Fencing*); 2) upland habitat enhancement (*Forest Health Management, Upland Wildlife Habitat Enhancement*); 3) surface and ground water quality protection and soil conservation on agricultural lands (*Livestock Heavy Use Protection Area, Livestock Waste Storage Facility, Livestock Stream Crossing*). The KCD Landowner Incentive Program cost-share reimbursement rates range from 50% to 90% of the project cost, depending on the natural resource management practice and within the established limit for the practice. KCD's ongoing activities associated with the Landowner Incentive Program include:

- **Award cost-share funding to promote implementation of eligible practices planned through a KCD technical service program.**

KCD Staff

- **Administer open cost-share contracts.**

KCD Staff

- **Monitor maintenance of funded practices for the lifetime of the practice.**

KCD Staff

Future Additional Programs

In response to the priorities identified by our partners, KCD proposes to strengthen its existing cost-share program by increasing implementation of natural resource management practices that protect and enhance water quality, improve water use efficiency, improve fish and wildlife habitat, and improve forest health. The KCD is well-positioned to work with more property owners across the urban and rural landscape of King County to implement conservation projects on their properties. Such projects can leverage local governments' efforts on public properties, such as working with creek-side property owners adjacent to parks to remove invasive plant species and replant with native species. KCD can provide education, technical assistance, and monitoring to assist landowners with planning and designing their cost-share project in response to the priorities identified by our partners. With regard to future additional services and program opportunities listed below, the KCD proposes to coordinate in partnership with its member jurisdictions to identify specific programmatic efforts and geographic areas of new and / or expanded investments. Opportunities shared by stakeholders include the following:

- **Increase funding to support implementation of Forest Health Management practices** in rural areas.

KCD /Grant

- **Provide funding to support implementation of Forest Health Management practices** on public lands and adjacent privately held parcels in urban areas.

KCD/Grant

- **Increase funding to support freshwater and marine Aquatic Area Enhancement practices.**

KCD/Grant

- **Work with jurisdictions to explore KCD support on low impact development practices** for reduced storm water runoff and improved water quality in urban areas.

KCD/Grant

- **Consider funding agriculture land drainage ditch maintenance, water conserving irrigation practices, and other practices** that improve resource management and protections on agriculture lands.

KCD/Grant

- **Consider the establishment of separate funding pools** for commercial farm projects and non-commercial agriculture land projects.

KCD/Grant

- **Work with jurisdictions to explore targeting urban areas funding to underserved communities** or communities that are disproportionately affected by water pollution, including toxics and sedimentation, or habitat degradation.

KCD/Grant

Current	Expanded
0.13 FTE Senior Program Manager 0.54 FTE Resource Specialist I <u>\$200,000 cost-share funding</u>	Add 1 FTE Program Manager <u>Add \$456,250 in new cost-share funding</u>
Current Funding \$277,306	New Funding \$559,876

7. Member Jurisdiction Grant Program - \$1,296,507

While not a new Opportunity identified by the Conservation Panel/Task Force, the existing Member Jurisdiction Grant Program was identified by participants as a high priority for continued funding. KCD proposes to continue to extend its mission and impact through providing funding for natural resource conservation to land managers in our member jurisdiction municipalities.

8. Advisory Committee, Communication, Outreach

While not a new Opportunity identified by the Conservation Panel/Task Force, Outreach was identified as an inadequately funded element in KCD's work plan. KCD committed to re-organize its 2014 programmatic funding to provide resources to support:

- An expanded and intensive Advisory Committee process,
- Outreach to our city partners, organizational marketing, and
- Other activities to strengthen our partnerships and raise regional literacy about KCD's impact on natural resource conservation.

As KCD develops its 2015 Program of Work with the Advisory Committee over the coming months, the work plan of this section will be developed.

King Conservation District Funding Structure

KCD receives funding from two primary sources, Rates & Charges and Grants. Rates and Charges are collected using a PER PARCEL mechanism from each tax parcel in the District (currently approximately \$5.14, with a

legislated cap of \$10 PER PARCEL). To meet the requirements of this funding, the King Conservation District must demonstrate both indirect and direct benefit to its ratepayers. KCD's programs are required to impact the following natural resource priorities in the public benefit:

- Aquatic Habitat
- Water Quality and Quantity
- Agricultural and Farmlands
- Forest Lands and Upland Habitat
- Economic Support for Working Lands

Next Steps

KCD is working closely with its Advisory Committee to build a Program of Work that reflects the needs and priorities of its constituents for submission to King County August 1, 2014.

Appendix

Conservation Task Force Members	Conservation Panel Members
<p>Alison Bennett, Policy Program Manager City of Bellevue Utilities</p> <p>Deanna Dawson, Executive Director Sound Cities Association</p> <p>Siri Erickson-Brown, Farmer Local Roots Farm King County Agriculture Commission Member</p> <p>Mark Isaacson, Division Director King County Dept of Natural Resources & Parks</p> <p>Bobbi Lindemulder Rural At-Large</p> <p>Scott MacColl, Intergovernmental Relations City of Shoreline</p> <p>Kathy Minsch, Regional Liaison Seattle Public Utilities</p> <p>Eric Nelson, Supervisor King Conservation District</p> <p>Mike Reed, Legislative Lead Analyst King County Council</p> <p>Carolyn Robertson, Gov Relations Manager City of Auburn</p> <p>Dick Ryon, Commissioner King County Rural Forest Commission</p> <p>Nicole Sanders, Associate Planner City of Snoqualmie</p> <p>Christie True, Director King County Dept of Natural Resources & Parks</p>	<p>Jim Berger, Mayor City of Carnation</p> <p>Richard Conlin Seattle City Councilmember</p> <p>Don Davidson Bellevue City Councilmember</p> <p>Reagan Dunn King County Councilmember</p> <p>Chris Eggen, Deputy Mayor City of Shoreline</p> <p>Fred Jarrett, Deputy Executive King County</p> <p>Kate Kruller City of Tukwila Councilmember</p> <p>Kathy Lambert King County Council Councilmember</p> <p>Kit Ledbetter, Supervisor King Conservation District</p> <p>Max Prinsen, Supervisor King Conservation District</p> <p>John Stokes Bellevue City Councilmember</p>