King Conservation District Strategic Plan

King Conservation District

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INTRODUCTION

King Conservation District (KCD) is a special purpose, non-regulatory district. Our mission is to empower people to conserve and enhance soil, water, food systems, forest, and habitat-now and for future generations. We provide education, technical assistance, and financial help to people stewarding the natural resources of King County. Private residents manage a significant portion of King County's streams, lakes, forests, and agricultural lands and KCD is their trusted partner in assisting them to improve water quality and soil health, increase tree canopy, reduce wildfire risk, and bolster local food systems.

King County's natural resources are interconnected. Assisting private residents to make improvements to their natural resources benefits us all. Reducing pollutants upstream improves water quality downstream. Increasing tree canopy in urban parks improves air quality across the region. Connecting local growers directly to customers improves economic viability and food access. Educating the public about natural resource conservation empowers them to take positive actions in their homes and in their communities.

KCD's Strategic Plan 2025-2027 aligns with KCD's Program of Work identified in the Interlocal Agreement with King County and establishes an overarching framework to guide our decisions and actions. This strategic plan will continue the progress made on initiatives identified as essential priorities by our Advisory Committee, Board of Supervisors, member jurisdictions, and community members across King County. These include activities and partnerships that will help build a sustainable and equitable local food system, improve the health of our forests, neighborhood tree canopies, shorelines and habitats, and improve water quality.

KCD service area includes all of King County, except for the incorporated areas of Federal Way, Enumclaw, Milton, Pacific, and Skykomish.

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Purpose and Values

KCD recognizes that our priorities must consider and integrate current conservation challenges tied to the historical context of racialized land use and natural resource policies or efforts in King County, as well as the latest approaches to address environmental challenges due to our quickly changing climate. Through this lens, all KCD actions are created and implemented with two overarching principles: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) and Climate Resiliency, to ensure we are addressing the pressing needs of community.

Mission

We empower people to conserve and enhance soil, water, food systems, forest, and habitat-now and for future generations.

Vision

We envision a community where everyone has access to the resources and guidance they need to be conservation stewards.

Values

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Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Justice

KCD recognizes the interconnectedness of personal well-being, care for others, and care for the environment. We actively look for ways to address historic inequities in conservation which includes how we serve communities and take action to build a culture of DEI in both our internal, and external policies and practices.

Trust

Trust within KCD is earned by consistently delivering on our commitments, practicing clear communication, holding ourselves accountable, engaging the larger community for decision-making, and by providing technical assistance grounded in the work of partner agencies and institutions.

Courage

KCD must be courageous as we tackle emerging issues and prioritize serving all people in King County. We strive to be a catalyst for change and embrace the opportunity to apply innovative approaches within conservation that center community voice and build relationships as we serve the diverse needs within our region.

Conservation

We focus on conservation outcomes to make a difference in the lives of the people in King County - now and for future generations.

Leadership

KCD empowers people to be leaders in conservation. We represent and support our community's needs and goals, on a continuous journey of learning, of how we can better serve everyone in King County.

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Approach and Process

Beginning in April of 2022, KCD began a strategic planning process that included a baseline equity assessment, stakeholder engagement, DEIJ training, and over 20 workshops focused on reimagining our Mission, Vision, Values, and work in our region using an equity lens. KCD staff, Board of Supervisors, Advisory Committee, Grantees, Cooperators, Partners, and KCD community members came together to share ideas and provide unique insights vital to the planning process.

The resulting plan is a co-created, living document, that preserves goals and actions from our 2019 Interlocal Agreement and 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. The new strategic plan informs our 2025 Interlocal Agreement and brings clarity to the impact KCD achieves within each area of operation and reflects our dedication to DEIJ and addressing climate change.

KCD Structure

KCD is a moderately sized District with more than 30 staff. We are structured into three Stewardship Teams, District Leadership, Member Jurisdiction Grants, Administrative Team, and a Communications, Outreach, Resources, and Education (C.O.R.E) Team. Each is described below with attention to focus areas within each major area of work.

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Farm Assistance and Working Lands Sustainability:

Farm Assistance and Working Lands Sustainability includes technical assistance, cost share, and direct assistance to implement farm conservation, agricultural drainage, local food assistance, and community agriculture projects. KCD also engages with land managers to move them from awareness to action with outreach and education in urban, suburban, and rural spaces. This program consists of:

Rural Land Stewardship

KCD will continue to provide technical assistance, cost share, and direct assistance to help land managers implement best management practices such as cover cropping, manure management, and installing fencing to protect water resources. KCD also aligns technical assistance and project implementation with the Critical Areas Ordinance, and the Livestock Ordinance, and qualification for the Public Benefit Ratings System current use taxation designation. And, KCD offers an equipment loan service, which provides access to equipment such as no-till drills, manure spreaders, and weed wrenches among other equipment.

Agricultural Drainage Assistance

KCD will continue its collaboration with King County's Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP). KCD will focus its efforts on land manager engagement and providing consultation and subject matter expertise to assist in the development of planting plans.

Community Agriculture

KCD will continue to partner with community-based organizations, faith institutions, and refugee and immigrant resettlement agencies to site and develop food production gardens and facilitate access to healthy soil, culturally appropriate seeds, and technical assistance. In addition, KCD will continue to implement a Community Agriculture focused grant program with priority given to underserved communities and community-based organizations.

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Local Food Assistance

KCD will annually use $900,000 of collected rate funds to provide direct assistance to support King County's Local Food Initiative.

Riparian Assistance:

KCD provides technical assistance, cost share, and direct assistance to implement riparian improvement projects throughout King County. KCD also engages with land managers to move them from awareness to action with outreach and education in urban, suburban, and rural spaces. This program consists of:

Riparian Restoration

KCD will continue to provide technical assistance, cost share, and direct assistance to help land managers implement best management practices such as removal of invasive species, planting natives, and installing buffers. Through KCD, qualified land managers may also access federal funds for buffer improvement through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. Our Riparian Restoration work occurs in both rural and urban settings, giving all land managers in King County an opportunity to improve natural resource conditions.

Plant Nursery

KCD manages a plant nursery consisting of both wetland and upland native plants. The plant nursery provides native plants to KCD restoration activities, partner restoration sites, and provides ongoing volunteer opportunities to engage and educate our community.

Restoration Crew

KCD will continue to partner with the Washington Department of Ecology to operate at least one Washington Conservation Corp Crew (WCC). The WCC crew is integral to the Riparian Team's efforts and provides a considerable percentage of onsite restoration activities.

Native Plant Sale

KCD will continue to hold an Annual Native Plant Sale to provide residents with access to affordable native trees, shrubs, and groundcovers while raising awareness of the benefits of landscaping with native plants.

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Forest Health:

KCD provides technical assistance, cost share, and direct assistance to implement forest health projects throughout King County. KCD also engages with land managers to move them from awareness to action with outreach and education in urban, suburban, and rural spaces. This program consists of:

Wildfire Preparedness

With climate change, shifting weather patterns, and changes in snowpack and rainfall, the threat of wildfire is increasing with significant tangible impacts on air quality across King County. Stakeholders are increasingly aware of the need to modify landscaping and land management practices to mitigate wildfire risk. KCD will continue to engage with land managers and homeowners' associations to assist in this type of planning and project development.

Urban Forest Stewardship

KCD will continue to work with cities to identify and develop projects to maintain and improve tree canopy and overall healthy urban forests on public and private property.

Small Lot Forest Stewardship

KCD will continue to work with small-lot forest land managers across unincorporated King County to increase the resilience of the forested landscape and capture the ecological, recreational, and other values of forests by helping land managers actively manage forestlands and open space areas. KCD will continue to work with King County, Washington State University (WSU) Extension and other partners to implement a program that promotes forest health on private lands through workshops, one-on-one education, and technical and financial incentives to plan and implement best management practices.

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Member Jurisdiction Grants and Services:

KCD partners with cities and other jurisdictions to increase conservation impact. KCD will continue to award non-competitive grants to local governments, nonprofit organizations, tribes, and other agencies to improve natural resources and increase regional conservation. These monies support high-impact projects in both urban and rural areas and are often matched with funding from state, federal, and other sources. KCD will also offer alternatives for member jurisdictions to use their allocations including services in lieu of grant funds, or direct technical assistance to organizations and residents of those jurisdictions. Member Jurisdictions also have the option of pooling their resources for projects.

C.O.R.E. Services:

KCD provides community outreach, resources and education (C.O.R.E) that empowers King County residents to become better stewards of our shared natural resources and take action with KCD or on their own. KCD provides online trainings, workshops, and peer-to-peer tours that build awareness of beneficial farm, forest, and riparian conservation practices and connect people with KCD programs and services.

Administration:

Administration includes the Board of Supervisor elections, our advisory committee, managing financial resources, and all actions in support of KCD operations.

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Climate Resiliency and Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Lenses

KCD recognizes that our priorities must consider and integrate current conservation challenges tied to the historical context of racialized land use and natural resource policies or efforts in King County, as well as the latest approaches to address environmental challenges due to our quickly changing climate. Through this lens, we recognize that Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEI)J are essential for the organization to fulfill its role as a community-based conservation resource.

In these next three years, our plan is calling for deliberate actions that will move all of King County and its residents in a more equitable and resilient manner. At the foundation of this plan is our community. KCD will actively engage our community to ensure our programs, actions, and activities meet their needs and lead to on-the-ground solutions to tough problems; ensuring a vibrant, healthy, and sustainable ecosystem. Strategically, this means we focus our programming in areas that represent the highest risk to our natural resources, that build synergy among our partners, and bring critical resources to communities who have traditionally been under-resourced.

Climate Change Considerations

KCD aims to equip land managers and greater King County residents with management techniques that improve natural resources such as water quality, soil health, forest canopy, and local food systems. It is imperative that we incorporate climate change considerations into our strategic actions because these efforts inherently coincide with existing environmental, ecosystem and community concerns in the region. The strategic plan outlines opportunities to improve climate mitigation and resilience throughout KCD's programs. Some of these broad-reaching themes on climate change integration include:

- **Consider climate change risks in programmatic decision-making.** As the climate continues to change, KCD's programs will be critical in supporting collective resilience to climate change. Thus, it is imperative that KCD incorporates existing and future predictions climate change risks into specific programmatic decisions, such as identifying critical habitats to conserve or restore.
- **Prioritize support to sites and community members experiencing more adverse effects of climate change.** It is important to evaluate which sites and community groups may be in areas that are more heavily impacted by climate change when deliberating how to allocate KCD support. This process should also include purposeful selection for under-resourced communities and individuals who may have a history of receiving minimal assistance, such as communities of color, low-income communities, and rural communities.
- **Incorporate climate change information in technical assistance.** When providing technical assistance, providing climate change information to various audiences – such as historical and future climate change conditions, or how climate change impacts specific communities and environments – can help foster a greater willingness to contribute to conservation efforts while building greater awareness of climate change in King County.
- **Leverage Puget Sound conservation goals**. King County climate resilience goals are supported by resources such as the Puget Sound Vital

Equity and Justice Considerations

An overarching goal of the King Conservation District's Strategic Plan is to emphasize equity and environmental justice throughout all its focus areas to implement actions that provide clear and direct benefits to the most vulnerable and traditionally under-resourced and underrepresented groups. The strategic plan incorporates opportunities to further KCDs equity efforts across various goals, including:

- **Prioritize under-represented community members.** KCD serves a wide variety of land managers and community members, all coming from different backgrounds with varied perspectives. As KCD looks to engage community members, they should prioritize typically under-resourced and underrepresented communities, including BIPOC, low-income, rural, LGBTQIA+, non-English speaking, etc. When allocating funding for new projects or assistance programs, KCD should continue to prioritize these typically under-resourced groups.
- **Address accessibility needs.** KCD encourages that support be given to property owners and land managers to promote conservation efforts and implement best management practices. These support opportunities present themselves as in-person site visits, events, presentations, and webinars. When considering accessibility for all whom KCD serves, it's important to offer options whenever possible. In continuing to promote accessibility, KCD should include translation services for both in-person and online events, as well as written engagement or education materials.
- **Government to government relationship with Tribal Partners.** KCD understands the historical and cultural context of the land we steward, and the people, cultures, and communities the health of the land impacts. We also recognize that the traditional and current homelands of Tribes and their territorial lands, waters, and air are contiguous and transcend U.S. government-established boundaries. KCD will ensure our conservation efforts complement and support the important conservation work of the Tribes around us.

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Signs and Action Agenda strategies. Leveraging resources and efforts across the region can ensure regional coordination on climate resilience goals.	

King Conservation District Wide Impact Statements

KCD identified nine overarching District-wide impact statements that will promote cross team collaboration, instill a positive District culture, ensure responsive external communication, and foster key partnerships: all within the framework of meeting the challenges of climate change and environmental justice. These impacts statements also create the foundation for many of our programs and focus area efforts in the remainder of this document. These statements include:
1. Staff, Board of Supervisors, Advisory Committee, and KCD Community feel a sense of belonging, trust, and understanding in all their interactions together.
2. KCD's finance and administration team supports staff and programs by ensuring clean audits, good standing with Washington State Conservation Commission, proper budgeting, satisfied staff, and successful program support.
3. KCD supports a growing, diverse, and vibrant staff by acknowledging the harms of the past while moving forward in a positive, supportive manner.
4. KCD empowers and incentivizes private and public land managers to steward, protect and enhance our shared natural resources – clean water, healthy soil, and resilient fish and wildlife habitat.
5. Every community member within our watersheds has access to education, technical assistance, and support for restoration, enhancement, and understanding of all natural resources within the County.
6. All audiences (including residents, non-profit organizations, and public agencies) are made aware of, and have a higher level of literacy about, the programs and services that KCD provides, the impact of our organization, and the ways in which we partner with people and organizations.
7. KCD will prioritize under-represented community members and accessibility to our programs with a sensitivity and acknowledgement to systemic inequities that have been built into and continue to be active in many areas of our community and nation.
8. KCD will approach our work in a manner that acknowledges the reality of climate change and its adverse impacts to natural resources and implement our work in a manner that ensures maximum climate resiliency.
9. KCD will approach our work in a manner that acknowledges natural resources have physical, cultural, ceremonial, spiritual, and historical meaning to Tribal Nations, and take seriously our role in a government-to-government relationship with Tribal Nations and the stewardship of these resources.

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PROGRAM GOALS, ACTIONS, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Farm Assistance and Working Lands Sustainability

Farm Assistance and Working Lands Sustainability includes technical assistance, cost share, and direct assistance to implement farm conservation, agricultural drainage, local food assistance, and community agriculture projects. KCD also engages with land managers to move them from awareness to action with outreach and education in urban, suburban, and rural spaces. This program consists of Rural Land Stewardship, Agricultural Drainage Assistance, Community Agriculture, and Local Food Assistance.

Climate Resiliency Considerations:

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1. Stay up to date on climate change issues and best Available Science.
2. Incorporate the best available climate science into technical assistance and cooperator interactions.
3. Investigate adding climate change as a section in our Farm Conservation Plans.
4. Prioritize nutrient management in areas with higher concerns of water pollution that may be worsened by climate change.
5. Allow for conservation efforts to encompass additional climate resilience components where possible.
6. Prioritize support for areas where agricultural drainage has the highest potential to benefit the surrounding ecosystem and broader community.
7. Ensure that buffer plans incorporate goals for riparian areas and nearby ecosystems.
8. Ensure crossings are future proofed for changing water situations.
9. Identify where vital sign goals and/or Action Agenda strategies can be addressed in fish passable crossing designs.
10. Promote and support best practices that improve the climate resiliency of existing community gardens.
11. Prioritize garden creation in areas with the highest risk of climate change impacts.
12. Include information regarding climate change's impacts on underserved areas.
13. Incorporate climate change's effects and mitigation strategies in educational opportunities.
14. Develop and provide climate change related project ideas as part of the Local Food Assistance strategic initiatives process.

DEIJ Considerations:

1. Develop methods to reach community members in under-resourced areas to find out needs and feedback from the community.
2. Incorporate equity facing recommendations from Local Food Assistance third party evaluation.
3. Ensure representation on Local Food Assistance working group includes organizations working with under-resourced communities.
4. Develop partnerships with community-based organizations providing services in under-resourced communities.
5. Include cultural competence and experience engaging under-resourced communities as criteria in Request for Proposals for grants and contracts in general.
6. Increase accessibility of support through online and in-person assistance and provide support materials in additional languages.
7. Include under-resourced communities as a priority in project development.
8. Target soil contaminant testing to areas of environmental disparities and historic toxin contamination.
9. Ensure equitable access to educational opportunities including translation services and transportation.
10. Prioritize garden creation in areas of greater environmental inequities and lower food access.

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Rural Land Stewardship

Mission Statement

Provide technical and financial resources to land managers to ensure sustainable agricultural lands, protect and enhance natural resources, and build resilient and equitable food systems.

Goal 1. Farmers, property owners, and land managers are empowered to take conservation actions that protect water quality, improve soil health, address climate change, and reduce other natural resource impacts.

Actions:

RLS 1.1: Provide technical assistance through in-person site visits, telephone, and digital communications.

RLS 1.2: Complete farm conservation plans and plan updates annually.

RLS 1.3: Increase the number of plans to self-selected clients.

RLS 1.4: Expand current pilot efforts on sub-basin targeting to improve water, soil, and habitat quality in watersheds that exhibit poor benchmarks.

RLS 1.5: Maintain county-wide farm natural resource planning support. This program currently addresses water quality, salmon habitat, and farm productivity goals.

RLS 1.6: Educate cooperators through farm tours, demonstrations, webinars, and other events.

RLS 1.7: Collaborate with Engagement and Education Teams to develop outreach and education activities/materials.

RLS 1.8: Facilitate an Equipment Rental Program.

RLS 1.9: Provide financial incentives and support for land managers to implement best management practices.

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Goal 2. Empower and incentivize private land managers to steward our shared natural resources through implementation of Best Management Practices.

Actions:

RLS 2.1: Collaborate with cross-team cost-share program to fund rural land BMPs.

RLS 2.2: Coordinate with Natural Resource Conservation Service, Department of Ecology, King County, the Washington State Conservation Commission, and other funding sources to complete projects.

RLS 2.3: Continue to explore ways to implement adaptive best management practices to address impacts to climate change.

RLS 2.4: Focus on assistance for our diverse and underserved communities in King County.

Goal 3. Demonstrate the crucial role of King County farmers in preserving natural resources and contributing to a vibrant and sustainable local agricultural ecosystem.

Actions:

RLS 3.1: Annually complete outreach to cooperators who have received farm plans and/or technical site visits.

RLS 3.2: Annually collect data on cooperators who participate in cost-share, complete actions in farm plans, or complete other natural resource best management practices.

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Accountability / Metrics

1. Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs for Rural Land Stewardship

- Farm conservation Plans written.
- Technical Assistance provided (new and repeat).
- Record the amount of conservation plan updates completed annually.
- Collect attendance data for farm tours, demonstrations, and classes.
- Monitor usage of education and outreach materials.

- Calculate total funding allocated for Rural Land BMPs.

2. Create an annual report that identifies key outcomes for Rural Land Stewardship.

- Best management practices (BMPs) implemented and type by funding source (i.e., cost-share, Cooperator implemented, district implemented, or grant funded)

- Natural Resource protection metrics from BMP implementation (i.e., Livestock kept out of Waterways).

3. Record annual outreach (surveys) to cooperators who have received farm plans and/or technical site visits.

4. Work with external agencies that monitor sub-basin water, soil, and habitat quality benchmarks and report annually on progress.

5. Record the number of cost-share applications reviewed.

6. Create accountability measures that ensure the facilitation of cost-sharing.

7. Record the total number of projects that went through KCD and utilized outside funding sources.

8. Track the use of KCD rental equipment: manure spreader, lime spreader, no-till drill, poultry processing equipment.

9. Include in annual report the number and result of assistance efforts with diverse and under-resourced King County communities.

- Develop quarterly baseline goals for expected engagement with diverse and under-resourced King County communities.

Dairy Planning

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Mission Statement

All dairy farmers in King County KCD have access to technical assistance and financial resources provided by the conservation district (RCW 90.64.070) to ensure compliance with regulations including in the Dairy Nutrient Management Act RCW 90.64.

Goal. Empower dairy farmers to address compliance issues related to water quality, soil health, and nutrient management.

Actions:

DP 1.1: Collaborate with agencies including the NRCS, WSDA, King County, and the Department of Ecology to provide planning, engineering, and financial assistance to all dairy farms and producers in King County.

DP 1.2: Assist dairy farms when a Washington State Department of Washington Agriculture (WSDA) referral is submitted to KCD, which requires commercial dairies to contact the District.

DP 1.3: Manage nutrients to reduce/prevent water pollution.

DP 1.4: Maximize conservation efforts and increase funding.

DP 1.5: Aid with complying with regulations.

DP 1.6: Annually author/update Dairy Nutrient Management Plans (or similar plans I.e., CAFO plans).

Accountability / Metrics

1. Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs for Dairy Nutrient Plans

- Dairy Nutrient Plans written and updated.

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- Technical Assistance provided (new and repeat).
- Record number of site visits to Dairy farms.

2. Create an annual report that identifies key outcomes for Dairy Planning.

- Natural Resource protection metrics from BMP implementation

3. Record number of WSDA referrals submitted to the KCD.
4. Record number of dairy farms KCD assists because of a WSDA referral submission.

Agricultural Drainage Assistance

Mission Statement

All farms in King Conservation District have access to drainage maintenance to preserve farmlands and increase productivity.

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Goal 1. Increase farmland drainage access and productivity in partnership with King County's Agricultural Drainage Assistance Program (ADAP).

Actions:

AD 1.1: Provide support and subject matter-expertise for cooperators needing agricultural drainage assistance to preserve farmlands and increase productivity.

AD 1.2: Support the clearing of drainage ditches.

AD 1.3: Engage with contiguous land managers to participate in ditch maintenance to bring agricultural lands (with poor drainage) back into production.

AD 1.4: Provide maintenance for all eligible waterways on a recurring schedule with alternative mitigation options.

Goal 2. All cooperators experiencing extreme flood events that threaten agricultural properties, livestock, and infrastructure have access to a rapid response program.

Actions:

AD 2.1: Provide in person drainage assessments with prioritization for agricultural lands experiencing severe flooding.

AD 2.2: Develop communication feedback loops with partners to provide immediate response to cooperators experiencing severe flooding.

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Goal 3. Increase fish habitat, improve water quality, and assist in farm access issues.

Actions:

AD 3.1: Collaborate with WDFW, tribal partners, fish advocacy groups, private engineers, and King County technical staff to identify and design fish passable crossings.

Ad 3.2: Assist in the development of buffer plans.

Accountability / Metrics

1. Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs for Agricultural Drainage

- ADAP projects implemented.
- Technical Assistance provided (new and repeat).
- Number of site visits for ADAP projects.
- Number of KCD deployments of immediate response to cooperators via in person drainage assessments.

2. Create an annual report that identifies key outcomes for ADAP.

- Natural Resource protection metrics from BMP implementation.
- Running total of acreage brought back into agricultural production every year.
- The number of fish passable crossings replaced at eligible farm crossings per year.
- The number of fish passable crossing designs created in collaboration with partners and other agencies.
- Number of feet of drainage ditch maintained.

3. Review and evaluate 25% of drainage projects for impact.

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Community Agriculture

Mission Statement

Community agricultural organizations in King County have access to land, technical resources, and financial resources necessary to safeguard food sovereignty, ensure resilient food systems and communities, and protect natural resources.

Goal 1. Empower community agriculture organizations to implement and grow projects that increase food access and production while safeguarding our natural resources.

Actions:

CA 1.1: Catalyze the creation of new community gardens.

CA 1.2: Provide technical assistance and financial support to community gardens.

CA 1.3: Provide relevant educational workshops, webinars, and resources to community agriculture organizations.

CA 1.4: Conduct targeted outreach of Community Agriculture services to underserved areas in South and East King County and those furthest from opportunity.

CA 1.5: Provide immigrant, refugee, and diverse gardeners with culturally-relevant seeds and plant starts.

CA 1.6: Provide cover crops seeds to community agriculture organizations.

CA 1.7: Support local gleaning efforts to reduce food waste while providing fresh, local, nutritious food to those who need it.

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Goal 2. Community growers have the knowledge and resources to safely grow nourishing food and protect water quality.

Actions:

CA 2.1: Provide free soil contamination testing to community agriculture organizations and expand soil testing program.

CA 2.2: Develop and distribute guidance to community gardeners on safely growing food in their specific locations.

Goal 3. Communities are empowered to develop Community Agriculture Plans that facilitate the creation of safe, productive, sustainable gardens and farms.

CA 3.1: Research existing programs and customize management plans for community agricultural sites.

CA 3.2: Support best management practices with funding, technical assistance, and implementation.

Accountability / Metrics

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Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs and outcomes for Community Agriculture

- Number of organizations engaged.
- Number of workshops held and community participation at each event.
- The amount of cover crop seeds distributed, and partners engaged.
- Number of new gardens Created annually.
- Number of culturally relevant seeds and plant starts distributed and partners engaged.
- Number of community agriculture organizations that have completed soil contaminant testing.
- Number of outreach strategies used and in which areas.
- Technical assistance and financial support provided to community gardens annually.

- Support provided to local gleaning efforts.
- Number of Community Agriculture Plans developed in collaboration with community partners.

Local Food Assistance

Mission Statement

All farms (large and small) and rural lands in King Conservation District have access to technical and financial resources to ensure sustainable agricultural lands, protection and enhancement of natural resources, and a resilient and equitable food system.

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Goal 1. King County farmers contribute to a vibrant and sustainable local agricultural ecosystem, benefiting both the economy and the environment, and play a leading role in supplying nutritious food to nearby communities with secured market stability for future generations.

Actions:

LFA 1.1: Develop new strategic initiatives that build on existing projects, such as Washington Farmland Trust's Working Farmland Partnership, and the BIPOC Farmland Trust as models of success.

LFA 1.2: Work with King County and stakeholders across the food system spectrum to identify strategies that will increase access to working farmland through lease, sale, or alternative tenure models.

LFA 1.3: Incorporate information gathered from the third-party evaluation to adjust program as appropriate.

LFA 1.4: Play a leading role in King County's Local Food Initiative refresh and Food System Advisory Council.

LFA 1.5: Build-out new strategic initiatives supporting hands-on learning and technical assistance for farm businesses.

LFA 1.6: Develop new partnerships and information on regional efforts to support farm business development.

Goal 2. King County residents have access to healthy local food and participation in the local food system.

LFA 2.1: Implement new strategic initiatives and competitive grants that build on existing projects, such as Puget Sound Farmers' Cooperative, South King County Food Hub development, and past and currently funded projects as models of success.

LFA 2.2: Work with King County and stakeholders across the food system spectrum to identify strategies to address storage, processing, and other infrastructure barriers.

LFA 2.3: Build on and support existing and emerging efforts that increase connections to farmers markets and other retail and institutional outlets.

LFA 2.4: Targeted outreach and engagement with King County and stakeholders across the food system spectrum to identify strategies (and additional funding) to address market barriers and opportunities for collaboration.

Goal 3. Streamline competitive grant program processes and management.

LFA 3.1: Incorporate information gathered from the third-party evaluation to establish grant program management processes and procedures.

LFA 3.2: Continue to collect and incorporate feedback on grant application process for continuous improvement.

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Accountability / Metrics

1. In partnership with stakeholders and the Local Food Assistance (LFA) working group, develop a list of quantifiable outcomes and metrics that will be required from all grantees as part of their quarterly and/or annual reporting.

2. As part of KCD annual report, list all natural resource outcomes and Local Food System enhancements from LFA competitive grants and Strategic Initiatives.

3. Hold an annual meeting with LFA stakeholders and Food System Advisory Council to evaluate policies and procedures, ensuring alignment with program goals, third-party evaluation criteria and overall program accomplishments. Create a written summary of the meeting and possible actions steps.

4. Ensure active grantees submit quarterly reports and conduct check-ins with all grantees at least annually.

5. Conduct an annual audit of LFA grant data, ensure data integrity and quality within the Foundant grant management software and KCD District files. Provide a report to stakeholders.

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Forest Health

KCD provides technical assistance, cost share, and direct assistance to implement forest health projects throughout King County. This program includes urban forest stewardship, small lot forestry, and wildfire preparedness. KCD also engages with land managers to move them from awareness to action with outreach and education in urban, suburban, and rural spaces.

Climate Resiliency Considerations:

Climate considerations for the forest team focus on raising awareness to climate issues, adjusting actions to minimize climate impacts, and prioritizing work where climate impacts may be disproportionately impacting our communities. Actions include, but are not limited to:

1. Match forest cooperators with agency partners that are near project region.
2. Consider providing education, planning, and technical and/or financial assistance virtually where possible.
3. Continue including climate change planning section in forest plans.
4. Offer/promote workshops specific to climate change impacts and mitigations options.
5. Work across the KCD and collaboratively promote climate change storytelling.
6. Learn best practices at climate change related lectures, meetings, webinars, and symposia. Include questions and concerns about effects of climate change on our forests.
7. Prioritize working with properties at risk for development or conversion to other land uses and those cooperators already experiencing climate impacts.
8. Participate in climate change related lectures, meetings, webinars, and symposia hosted by partner agencies.
9. Discuss strategies for communicating with and engaging forest managers around climate change issues.
10. Gain understanding of community partners climate change concerns and make addressing their climate change concerns and climate change impacts part of new partnerships with communities.
11. Gain understanding of how agency partners address climate change and make addressing climate change impacts to communities part of new partnerships.
12. Include information as to how specific climate change impacts will influence wildfires in Western WA.
13. Keep up to date on how climate change impacts wildfire risk factors.
14. Work with partners and internal KCD staff to identify key climate change metrics and how to measure consistently. By the end of this strategic plan have climate change metrics for urban forest health finalized and begin utilizing in 2028.
15. Use climate adaptive species or southern seed sources where possible.
16. Use climate change storytelling of project impacts.
17. Prioritize planting and preservation over policy and planning.

Draft

DEIJ Considerations:

DEIJ considerations of the forest team are to focus efforts with intentionality to ensure DEIJ issues are addressed at all levels of the forest team's work plan. This includes working with partners and cooperators to maintain a safe space to discuss these issues and creativity to implement actions. Actions include, but are not limited to:

1. Prioritize outreach/service areas for each agency, pool resources when possible, to ensure the needs of under-resourced areas are addressed collectively (ensure that service area coverage is equitable)
2. Provide a range of referral pathways that are accessible to all.
3. Determine equity gaps in service, increase language and transportation access where possible.
4. Translate outreach materials to reach non-English speaking communities, provide a range of paths (social media, newsletters, tabling, etc).
5. Track demographics to identify under-resourced populations.
6. Develop considerations for 100%-funded practices when financial hardship is a concern.
7. Investigate grants that prioritize equity that will make up the funding difference.
8. Collaborate with city partners to identify under-resourced neighborhoods to prioritize services.
9. Coordinate efforts to maximize impacts in priority neighborhoods, under-resourced communities, and tribes.
10. Discuss successful strategies in identifying opportunities and pathways for engaging with historically under-resourced groups and communities e.g. non-English-speaking forest managers.
11. Prioritize efforts to maximize impacts in priority neighborhoods, under-resourced communities and tribes.
12. Prioritize communities that will be disproportionately impacted by climate change – higher heat, health impacts, as identified in WA Health Disparities maps or other tools/maps.
13. Gain understanding of how agency partners address DEIJ and make addressing DEIJ part of new partnerships.
14. Provide self-learning and self-risk assessment resources in non-English languages and shared with organizations that serve non-English speaking residents.
15. Under-resourced and vulnerable populations within highest risk areas should be identified and services should be adapted to meet the needs of these populations.
16. Include in the planning and implementation of projects how DEI is being addressed and how under-resourced and vulnerable populations are impacted by projects.
17. Prioritize recruiting and supporting trainees that provide services to high-risk areas with under-resourced and vulnerable populations.
18. Updates to cost-share should consider and address, where possible, identified barriers to under-resourced and vulnerable populations accessing cost-share funding.
19. Provide written training tools in additional languages that are prevalent in at-risk WUI areas.

Draft

20. Resources and projects should be based on the needs of community residents, especially the needs of under-resourced and vulnerable residents.
21. Provide early community involvement to encourage culturally appropriate planting locations and species, and prioritize low canopy areas.
22. Offer remote options, transportation, childcare, translation and interpretation, and/or stipends etc. as possible.
23. Prioritize work in South King County and areas highlighted in equity mapping tools.

Small Lot Forestry

Mission Statement:

Support the sustainable management of forest resources in unincorporated King County by providing education, technical assistance, and financial assistance to small-acreage land managers to maintain healthy and resilient forests.

Draft

Goal 1. Increase the health and resilience of the forested landscape throughout unincorporated King County and enhance the ecological and environmental values of forests.

Actions:

SLFS 1.1: Coordinate with partner agency program staff on a regular basis to clarify each agency's target audience, program goals, and available services.

SLFS 1.2: Identify referral pathways for each agency to ensure land managers are connected with the correct points of contact

SLFS 1.3: Develop and update outreach materials to capture all services available to forest land managers and how to access them.

SLFS 1.4: As internal and external staffing levels and programming change, coordinate to ensure new services don't duplicate existing services and minimize gaps in service that may arise from these changes.

SLFS 1.5: Provide financial incentives and support for land managers to implement best management practices.

Goal 2. Support landscape-scale forest restoration efforts by building robust partnerships with natural resource partner agencies throughout King County, and ensure local landowners have the information, tools, and resources necessary to know which partner will serve their needs best.

Actions:

Draft

SLFS 2.1: Provide education, technical assistance, stewardship planning, and financial assistance to small-acreage forest land managers in unincorporated King County.

SLFS 2.2: Participate in program evaluation (e.g., Survey existing cooperators) to ensure forest management needs are being met and to identify possible gaps in service or opportunities to improve programming.

SLFS 2.3: Work with partner agencies to co-fund projects and leverage other funding sources when possible.

SLFS 2.4: Work with small-acreage forest owners in incorporated jurisdictions

SLFS 2.5: Meet with partner agencies to identify regional priorities and opportunities for collaboration on region-wide issues.

SLFS 2.6: Share successes and failures among partners to refine strategies for addressing these issues.

SLFS 2.7: Align program efforts and services with partner agencies' long-range planning where possible and appropriate to maximize program impact.

Accountability / Metrics

1. Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs and outcomes for Small Lot Forestry.

    - Number of technical assistance visits
    - Number of completed forest plans
    - Amount of funding provided through cost-share
    - Amount of funding from grants used to complete projects
    - Acres of invasive plants treated
    - Number of native plants planted
    - Overall acreage impact of projects

2. Publish a Small Lot Forestry annual report with partners that identifies major work accomplished together, service GAPS, and opportunities for program adjustments.

3. Hold quarterly meetings with partners - document attendance, provide a summary of meeting, and identify action steps.

Draft

Wildfire Preparedness

Mission

Empower individual residents and communities located in at-risk wildland urban interface areas of King County to reduce the potential loss or damage to life, property, and public/ecosystem health from a wildfire event through education, technical assistance, and financial assistance.

Goal 1. Program cooperators have a practical understanding of their wildfire risk factors and vulnerabilities and know how to mitigate them on their properties and in their communities.

Actions

WPP 1.1: Provide home and community risk assessments to residents/communities located in highest risk WUI areas of our district that aren't being served by other agencies or organizations.

WPP 1.2: Engage in-person with communities and residents living in highest risk Wildland Urban Interface areas of our district through in-community meetings and presentations.

WPP 1.4: Develop easily accessible self-learning and self-risk assessment resources for any King County resident to better understand wildfire in Western WA and their home's wildfire risk.

WPP 1.5: Further develop and implement methods to measure changes in program cooperator understanding of wildfire risk and how to mitigate wildfire risk.

WPP 1.6: Provide financial incentives and support for land managers to implement best management practices.

Draft

Goal 2. Support and develop local wildfire mitigation capacity in the highest risk areas of our District through relationship building and partnerships with other agencies, organizations, and local communities.

WPP 2.1: Develop relationships and partnerships with other agencies and organizations working in highest risk areas of our District (Skykomish, Snoqualmie Pass, Rural SE King County, Vashon Island) and learn what their concerns, needs and available resources and capacities are.

WPP 2.2: Develop relationships with local communities and community leaders in highest risk areas of our District and learn what their concerns and needs are related to wildfire risk and mitigation.

WPP 2.3: Partner with local communities and agency/organization partners to plan and complete wildfire mitigation capacity building projects based on the needs of local community.

WPP 2.4: Help organize and support trainings in King County that increase the number of King County based fire and forestry agency staff capable of providing home risk assessments.

WPP 2.5: Increase the amount of public and private funding being invested into wildfire mitigation and preparedness in the highest risk areas of king county.

WPP 2.6: Annually review and as needed update how KCD's cost-share funding is awarded so it's supporting wildfire mitigation projects in King County's highest risk areas.

Draft

Goal 3. Increase the number of homes in King County's highest risk communities that have been hardened for wildfire.

WPP 3.1: Target program outreach and delivery of program services to highest risk communities.

WPP 3.2: Maintain contact and engagement with existing cooperators living in highest risk communities around home hardening and resources to help them harden their home.

WPP 3.3: Create outreach media that highlights home hardening accomplishments.

WPP 3.4: Work with partners to create resources and plan projects for high-risk areas that will help residents complete home hardening practices.

Goal 4. Program services and funding for wildfire mitigation projects are accessible to all and prioritized for under-resourced and vulnerable residents living in King County's highest risk communities.

WPP 4.1: Conduct an analysis of and research the King County at-risk WUI areas to identify where under-resourced communities and vulnerable residents are located and what barriers may limit their access to our wildfire program's services.

WPP 4.2: Implement modifications or exemptions to program services to overcome identified barriers.

WPP 4.3: Develop and implement a proactive outreach and engagement campaign for an under-resourced community or group of vulnerable residents located in King County at-risk WUI areas.

Draft

Accountability / Metrics

1. Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs and outcomes for Wildfire Preparedness

    - Number of residents from under-resourced communities that used program services and received cost-share funding.
    - Number of residents from vulnerable populations that used program services and received cost-share funding, annually.
    - Summary of outreach and engagement activities completed in the highest risk areas of King County.
    - Number and location of homes that have completed home hardening practices.
    - Community and home risk assessment results (changes from previous assessments)
    - Summary of relationship building and partnership formation progress and accomplishments.
    - Summary of wildfire concerns and mitigation needs identified and recognized in high-risk communities.
    - Number of and what kind of mitigation capacity building projects being planned or have been implemented.
    - Number of home and community risk assessments completed.

2. Develop and report on Pre and Post community engagement surveys to collect information about knowledge gain and planned actions by attendees of events.
3. Develop and report on Pre and Post service surveys at various time frames to collect information about knowledge gain, actions taken or planned, and changes in program cooperator understanding of wildfire risk.

Urban Forest Stewardship

Mission

Protect, restore, and increase tree canopy cover in urban areas with an emphasis on creating equity and community inclusion.

Draft

Goal 1. Increase cities' capacity to accomplish their urban forestry goals through funding and technical assistance.

Actions:

USF 1.1: Provide project management, implementation, and technical assistance services to member jurisdictions.

USF 1.2: Promote best management practices and climate smart planting and design.

USF 1.3: Identify and scope necessary steps to provide technical and financial assistance to unincorporated special purpose districts (i.e., schools, water and sewer districts, park districts, utilities), urban incorporated areas and Vashon Parks.

UFS 1.4: Identify and scope necessary steps to provide technical assistance to communities with steep slope areas.

Goal 2. Increase urban tree canopy coverage prioritizing low canopy and under-resourced areas.

Actions:

USF 2.1: Update tree canopy viewer on regular basis to aid planning.

USF 2.2: Maintain existing trees and green spaces, plant new trees, and restore forested green spaces in communities across King County in partnership with our member jurisdictions and other partners.

Goal 3. Ensure equitable distribution of services.

Actions:

USF 3.1: Focus outreach and project work in South King County and areas highlighted in equity mapping tools (e.g., WA health disparities map, TNC tree equity map, PlanItGeo tree canopy viewer, USDA Climate Economic & Justice Screening Tool).

USF 3.2: Determine baseline of who served to measure project impacts on target communities.

USF 3.3: Meet access needs of a varied audience.

Draft

Accountability / Metrics

1. Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs and outcomes for Urban Forest Stewardship
    - Number of under-resourced communities served,
    - Percent change in tree canopy
    - Number of trees provided through tree giveaways
    - Number of volunteers trained
    - Dollars of financial support granted for projects
    - Dollars of external funding used for projects

2. Create and implement a survey to measure impacts on target communities and satisfaction levels, consider holding community meetings as follow up.

4. Create a report on the barriers and opportunities to providing steep slope technical assistance to local communities (partner with Riparian Team)

5. Conduct a survey of special purpose districts to determine gaps and needs for KCD expanded technical assistance in these areas and provide a summary report.

Riparian Assistance

KCD provides technical assistance, cost share, and direct assistance to implement riparian improvement projects throughout King County. This program consists of riparian restoration, plant nursery, and restoration crew. KCD also engages with land managers to move them from awareness to action with outreach and education in urban, suburban, and rural spaces.

Draft

Climate Resiliency Considerations:

1. Stay up to date on climate change issues and Best Available Science.
2. Consider plant material that can sequester carbon and/or native plant species.
3. Include information about potential climate impacts to aquatic areas in educational materials.
4. Prioritize support to sites that are most susceptible to climate change impacts.

DEIJ Considerations

1. Ensure accessibility of educational opportunities through in-person and virtual events and provide educational materials in additional languages.
2. Partner with community-based organizations for volunteer events in under-resourced communities.
3. Develop relationships and outreach to community groups and schools in under-resourced communities.

Riparian Restoration

Mission

Every community member within our watersheds have access to education, technical assistance, and support for restoration and enhancement project implementation to ensure healthy connected riparian corridors for habitat, and clean water for fish, and wildlife.

Goal 1. Property owners and managers of aquatic areas (rivers/streams/wetlands/ponds/lakes/marine) are aware and understand the importance of healthy watersheds and riparian buffers.

Draft

Actions

RS 1.1: Provide educational opportunities to aquatic area property owners/managers.

RS 1.2: Host volunteer events for community members.

RS 1.3: Host restoration work parties on our riparian enhancement projects.

RS 1.4: Host native plant propagation, maintenance, and facilities improvement events at the WPC Nursery.

Goal 2. King County property owners and managers are empowered to improve and protect their aquatic areas.

Actions:

RS 2.1: Provide technical assistance to property owners/managers with aquatic areas, including one-on-one site visits, phone calls, and email correspondence.

RS 2.2: Provide site specific recommendations and resources to ensure restoration actions are successful.

RS 2.3: Collaborate with Engagement and Education Teams to develop outreach and education activities/materials.

RS 2.4: Provide financial incentives and support for land managers to implement best management practices.

Goal 3. Improve aquatic areas and support evolving regional priorities for natural resource conservation and enhancement, such as increased regional resilience to climate change and habitat connectivity.

Draft

Actions:

RS 3.1: Solicit, design, implement, and maintain freshwater and marine restoration and enhancement projects on privately held land.

RS 3.2: Focus on urban residents within member jurisdictions.

RS 3.3: Focus on farmers and other rural residents within unincorporated King County.

RS 3.4: Focus on Puget Sound marine shoreline residents in cooperation with Shore Friendly King County.

RS 3.5: Provide workshops, one-on-one education, and technical and financial assistance for implementing best management practice.

RS 3.6: Partner with our member jurisdictions and other local and regional partners.

RS 3.7: Continue and grow collaborations with Partners to extend our resources beyond KCD projects.

RS 3.8: Contribute plant material from the WPC in partnership with organizations and agencies implementing riparian restoration projects.

RS 3.9: Increase project impacts on the landscape by creating more habitat connectivity.

RS 3.10: Implement new projects adjacent to existing projects.

RS 3.11: Implement new projects adjacent to partner projects and protected open space.

RS 3.12: Implement projects that incorporate multiple adjacent properties.

RS 3.13: Increase number of projects with complex restoration techniques such as LWM, shoreline armor removal, bioengineering stabilization, and LTPBR cent properties.

Draft

Accountability / Metrics

1. Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs and outcomes for Riparian Restoration
   - Number of educational events held for aquatic land managers
   - Number of volunteer events and/or work parties hosted
   - Sum instances of engagement with freshwater and marine aquatic land managers
   - Total freshwater aquatic area planting and enhancement projects
   - Acreage and miles of restored aquatic areas on urban and rural lands
   - KCD Efforts towards marine restoration and enhancement projects on private land
   - KCD Efforts towards farmers and other rural residents within unincorporated King County
   - KCD efforts towards farmers and other rural residents within unincorporated King County
   - KCD efforts towards Puget sound marine shoreline residents in cooperation with Shore Friendly King County
   - Number of cost-share projects funded

Member Jurisdiction Grants and Services

KCD partners with cities and other jurisdictions to increase conservation impact. KCD will continue to award non-competitive grants to local governments, nonprofit organizations, tribes, and other agencies to improve natural resources and increase regional conservation. These monies support high-impact projects in both urban and rural areas and are often matched with funding from state, federal, and other sources. KCD will also offer alternatives for member jurisdictions to use their allocations including services in lieu of grant funds, or direct technical assistance to organizations and residents of those jurisdictions. Member Jurisdictions also have the option of pooling their resources for projects.

Climate Resiliency Considerations

1. Develop and provide climate justice related project idea list with City of Seattle.
2. Develop questions to collect feedback on climate change considerations.
3. Work with KCD urban riparian and forestry programs to identify climate change priority project types and locations.
4. Work with advisory committee subcommittee to develop recommended climate change project idea list.
5. Include and report on climate change outcomes in evaluation.

Draft

DEIJ Considerations

1. Prioritize community organizations involved with typically under-resourced communities.
2. Develop questions to collect feedback on equity priorities related to MJ grant funding and community needs.
3. Work with KCD urban riparian and forestry programs to identify equity priority projects and locations.

4. Work with advisory committee subcommittee to identify barriers of participation of jurisdictions.

5. Include and report on equity outcomes in evaluation.

Mission Statement:

Supports jurisdictions and community organizations with funding to raise awareness about and steward our natural resources in a responsible way that results in climate resilience for King County residents.

Goal 1. Member Jurisdictions experience a streamlined grant process that is accessible, equitable, and builds trust.

Draft

Actions

MJG 1.1: Update the grant agreement to provide a more equitable funding structure for community organizations.

MJG 1.2: Collect feedback and adjust process or program as appropriate

MJG: 1.3 Update policies to adapt to grantee needs and regional issues.

MJG 1.4: Evaluate outcomes of closed grants

MJG 1.5: Continue efficient management of KCD grants utilizing Foundant Grant Lifecycle Management software.

MJG 1.6: Conduct data cleanup/collection to aid in project mapping and storytelling

Goal 2. Member Jurisdictions consistently utilize their funding allocations.

Actions:

MJG 2.1: Engage with jurisdictions to find out local needs and partner with them to implement those needs.

MJG 2.2: Continue coordination with KCD urban riparian and forestry programs, to conduct targeted outreach to Member Jurisdictions raising awareness about grant funding, technical assistance and leveraging partnership opportunities.

MJG 2.3: Promote pooling funds from multiple jurisdictions for a shared project.

MJG 2.4: Create and manage an as needed subcommittee of Advisory Committee focused on Member Jurisdiction Grants to develop outreach plans, pooling resource ideas, and provide updates.

Draft

Goal 3. KCD-Seattle Community Partnership Grant program provides equitable funding practices and continuous improvement.

Actions:

MJG 3.1: Offer an annual or semi-annual grant opportunity to Seattle community organizations.

MJG 3.2: Implement revised agreement structure for Seattle grantees.

MJG 3.3: Partner with city on special projects related to grantee identified concerns regarding soil health and other natural resource concerns with an equity nexus and prioritize communities in Seattle experiencing legacy of soil contamination.

Accountability / Metrics

1. Create an annual report that identifies the key outputs and outcomes for Member Jurisdiction Grants and Services

2. Develop MJ grant evaluation criteria and use the criteria to evaluate 25% of closed MJ grants on an annual basis.

2. Hold an annual meeting with stakeholders, KCD Staff and other partners to evaluate policies and procedures, ensuring alignment with program goals and overall program accomplishments. Create a written summary of the meeting and possible actions steps.

3. Conduct an annual audit of MJ grant data, ensure data integrity and quality within the Foundant grant management software and KCD District files. Provide a report to stakeholders.

4. Develop, conduct, and report results of an annual community survey, focused on community needs.

C.O.R.E. Services

Draft

KCD provides community outreach, resources and education that empowers King County residents to become better stewards of our shared natural resources and take action with KCD or on their own. KCD provides online trainings, workshops, and peer-to-peer tours that build awareness of beneficial farm, forest, and riparian conservation practices and connect people with KCD programs and services.

Climate Resiliency Considerations

1. Work with KCD stewardship teams to develop questions to collect feedback on climate change considerations.
2. Include and report on climate change outcomes in project evaluations and annual report.
3. Include content focused on mitigating the impacts of climate change, and soil and water conservation.
4. Include content (across all program areas) related to impacts of climate change and steps to mitigate impacts.
5. Include trainings on climate change for both youth and adults.
6. Include climate mitigation natural resource management resources.
7. Develop specific questions to understand climate change interests and concerns.
8. Provide study resources to Envirothon participants related to climate change, particularly on the subjects of aquatics, wildlife, soils, and forestry.
9. Focus on local and regional climate issues.

10. Increase climate discussions and keyword tags in web postings.
11. Work with all KCD teams to develop climate change facing content and storytelling.
12. Incorporate traditional ecological knowledge into climate mitigation and/or resilience efforts.
13. Site visits should demonstrate KCD's climate change focus.
16. Work with stewardship teams to include how climate change affects agriculture, natural resources, and working lands during educational events.
17. Work with stewardship teams to translate technical language into plain language.

DEIJ Considerations

1. Prioritize community organizations involved with typically under-resourced communities.
2. Identify and reduce barriers to accessing KCD's education programming.
3. Collect demographic data and use as a resource to ensure we are meeting the needs of our community.
4. Add reporting metrics on demographic data, urban/rural residency, income, etc.
5. Seek out partnerships with organizations in under-resourced communities.
6. Focus on building relationships with new communities, seeking to understand their unique interests and needs (rather than assuming we know what they need).
7. Seek out partnerships with schools and youth groups in under-resourced communities.
8. Target schools to partner with that have identified increased barriers to participation.
9. Gain understanding of relative accessibility to environmental education curriculum.
10. Work to improve Envirothon access across school districts with higher percent BIPOC, low-income, and rural students in WA state.
11. Identify priority schools and compile list based on underserved student demographics and school funding and resources.
12. Include DEIJ goals in backward design structure.
13. Work plans should include culturally competent programming.
14. Consider community demographics to create culturally competent materials.
15. Work with stewardship, MJ, and LFA teams to develop equity project highlights.
16. Familiarize KCD programs with community engagement continuum tools.
17. Site visits should include KCD's equity focus areas.

Draft

18. Consider time and site location when planning activities to allow for board participation.
19. Consider in-person and virtual engagement options.
20. Provide engagement materials in additional languages.

Education

Mission Statement

Provide conservation education opportunities to community members to increase knowledge of natural resource management practices, their effects on the environment and climate, and the outcomes of stewardship which lead to improved soil health and water quality throughout King County.

Draft

Goal 1. King County residents have broad environmental knowledge and understanding of KCD's services, natural resource Best Management Practices, and environmental issues, including mitigating the impacts of climate change, and soil and water conservation.

Actions

ED 1.1: Work with district staff to design relevant programming focused on conservation topics and natural resource management practices

ED 1.2: Identify successful outcomes for each education program, such as increased knowledge, behavior change, scientific literacy, and BMP implementation.

ED 1.3: Align education annual work plan with internal program needs and goals.

ED 1.4: Develop participant pre and post surveys: Survey responses indicating cooperator baseline understanding pre-event, and intent for stewardship action and knowledge gained post-event.

ED 1.5: Move willing participants through the “arc of engagement” to receive Technical Assistance and implement BMPs.

ED 1.6: Utilize backward design curriculum development to ensure specific learning objectives.

ED 1.7: Standardize systems between education, engagement, and implementation teams.

ED 1.8: Provide follow-up contact to evaluate outcomes of KCD educational programs. Including but not limited to: determine whether participants implement BMPs; detect behavior changes; increase science literacy.

Goal 2. KCD educational resources serve rural and urban community members of all ages, including historically under-resourced populations.

Draft

Actions:

ED 2.1: Understand the education needs of under-resourced communities, through relationship building and forming partnerships.

ED 2.3: Connect land managers, renters, volunteers, community gardeners, community restorationists, and other King County land stewards with resources to improve natural resource management.

ED 2.4: Connect people to their local environment, providing a sense of place and community, and a deeper understanding of their relationship with nature.

ED 2.5: Connect KCD teams to under-resourced communities via expanding educational opportunities beyond current audience scope.

ED 2.6: Design programming that makes connections between necessary skills and knowledge, scientific topics, and real-world problems audiences are facing.

Goal 3. KCD plays a leading role in WA State Envirothon including regional and statewide competitions.

Actions:

ED 3.1: Support State and Regional Envirothon Competitions in partnership with other WA state CD education programs.

ED 3.2: Support Envirothon teams in King County by providing training resources, including workshops and study bins.

ED 3.3: Engage with schools to increase participation in Envirothon and reduce barriers for students and teachers.

Goal 4. Increase KCD's impact on youth education.

Draft

Actions:

ED 4.1: Support KCD youth programming with educational resources.

ED 4.2: Explore opportunities to engage with schools on conservation topics.

ED 4.3: Integrate opportunities for youth engagement at all education events.

ED 4.4: Identify the needs of schools and provide resources accordingly.

ED 4.5: Prioritize and support King County youth/school engagement within staff annual work plans

ED 4.6: Identify barriers schools face which limit access to environmental curriculum.

ED 4.7: Partner with and support KCD staff who lead youth programming

ED 4.8: Develop relevant materials and activities for youth at events.

ED 4.9: Build relationships with schools and teachers; identify champion teachers.

ED 4.10: Attend trainings related to developing educational evaluation and assessment.

ED 4.11: Develop evaluation process for education event participants, including youth programming.

ED 4.12: Attend trainings related to developing educational evaluation and assessment.

Accountability / Metrics

1. Create, implement, and report pre-event and post-event survey results to evaluate cooperator baseline understanding (pre-event) and intent for stewardship action and knowledge gained (post-event).

2. Evaluate educational programs to determine community impact and/or BMP implementation efforts. Utilize new KCD Database to track and record cooperators and participation in education events.

3. Evaluate and document annually land steward (cooperator) engagement.

4. Report participation in Envirothon committee meetings, competitions, resources provided by KCD.

5. Report annually on all relevant education metrics, including youth engagement, adult engagement, KCD staff attendance, and follow up contacts for education events.

6. Track KCD collaboration with Stewardship Teams and provide data for KCD annual report on team accomplishments.

Engagement

Mission Statement

Draft

All audiences (including residents, non-profit organizations, and public agencies) are made aware of, and have a higher level of literacy about, the programs and services that KCD provides, the impact of our organization, and the ways in which we partner with people and organizations.

Goal 1. Rural and urban community members understand their connection to, and role in, a healthy environment and KCD's programs and services to support them.

Actions:

E 1.2: Identify ways to increase KCD's reach, and program marketing of KCD services, with a focus on under-resourced communities.

E 1.2: Increase partnerships and collaborations with community-based organizations and local governments.

E 1.3: Implement best practices for community engagement with a focus on accessibility in communications and outreach activities.

E 1.4: Provide KCD materials and storytelling in plain language and include contextual information.

E 1.5: Highlight and increase work with urban residents and those who are not land managers. Increase highlights and storytelling across urban and rural communities.

Draft

Goal 2. Policymakers and stakeholders have full understanding on the critical needs KCD addresses.

Actions:

E 2.1: Invite elected officials and their staffers to project sites to educate them on the importance of both rural and urban stewardship.

E 2.2: Develop and deploy a process for inviting board and stakeholders to events and site visits.

Goal 3. KCD programs and services have the support they need to meet their engagement goals.

Actions:

E 3.1: Provide templates, best management practices, and direct support to all KCD programs.

E 3.2: Collaborate with stewardship teams to develop a multi-year outreach strategy to increase participation in stewardship services county-wide.

E 3.3: Work with KCD teams to develop direct mailers for recently transferred properties and neighboring properties of current projects.

E 3.4: Improve SEO and accessibility of website.

Draft

Accountability / Metrics

1. Track and report annually website utilization metrics.
2. Gather attendance data and annually report on number of elected officials and their staffers at project sites.
3. Track and report annually KCD earned media statistics.

4. Track and report annually KCD Teams metrics of participation in services.

5. Track and report annually new partnerships and collaborations with community-based organizations and local governments.

6. Track and report annually any increases in KCD's reach and program marketing of KCD services; include where increases occur.

Administration

Administration includes the Board of Supervisor elections, our advisory committee, managing financial resources, and all actions in support of KCD operations.

Draft

Board of Supervisors

Goal 1. KCD's elections see an increased voter turnout of 10 % in the next three years.

Actions:

B 1.1: Collaborate with external partners to increase visibility and outreach around the KCD election.

B 1.2: Partner with external organizations to host candidate forums.

B 1.3: Provide resources such as a postcard to ensure all eligible voters have access to the ballot.

B 1.4: Advocate for state legislative changes that promote election integrity and visibility.

Goal 2. KCD elections are secure and maintain the integrity of democratic process.

Actions:

B 2.1: Conduct end of election assessment to identify opportunities for improvement.

B 2.2: Collaborate with King County Elections to facilitate election process.

KCD Culture

Mission

Staff, Board of Supervisors, Advisory Committee, and KCD Community feel a sense of belonging, trust, and understanding in all their interactions together.

Draft

Goal 1. KCD's work environment demonstrates mutual respect, trust, and cooperation.

Actions:

C 1.1: Administer an annual KCD Culture Survey.

C 1.2: Provide opportunities for Staff to have more interaction with the Board of Supervisors, one-on-one, and as a group.

C 1.3: Create a feedback loop that informs staff on next steps or actions that can or cannot be taken related to actions or policy changes that directly impact staff.

C. 1.4: Develop and implement annual team building activities and celebrate work milestones. Provide more opportunities for team building through office gatherings and activities that everyone can enjoy (i.e., Soggy Bottom field day, end of year celebration).

C. 1.5: Develop and implement training modules for people supervisors related to conflict management and positive team building.

C. 1.6: Create an employee recognition program.

Goal 2. KCD employees have the support and resources they need for success and continuous professional development.

Draft

Actions:

C 2.1: Develop annual training program in addition to KCD training stipends. Topics may include professional development, DEIJ, management skills, KCD office-wide procedures, mentorship, and building professional relationships.

C 2.2: Engage in state-wide professional development including educational opportunities and certificates that better enable staff to function and provide for clients (for example, riparian/dairy professional certification).

C 2.3: Develop an annual survey on equipment, technology, and gear needs.

C 2.4: Conduct a salary study every 4 years.

C 2.5: Review job descriptions as part of annual performance review.

C 2.6: Create an accountability mentor/buddy system.

C 2.7: Maintain fleet and equipment monthly and refresh on a planned cycle.

Accountability / Metrics

1. Annually report to Board of Supervisors on employee level of satisfaction working at KCD based on survey and exit interviews.
2. Track number of issues brought up by Staff and when/how addressed and/or resolved.
3. Track and report on the number of Staff with new certifications/number of Staff seeking certifications.
4. Track and report on number of team-building activities held. Level of satisfaction with team-building activities, measured with a survey.

Finance

Mission

KCD's finance and administration team supports staff and programs by ensuring clean audits, good standing with Washington State Conservation Commission, proper budgeting, DEI work, satisfied staff, and successful program support.

Draft

Goal 1. KCD's budget is transparent and understood by our Board of Supervisors, funders, and advisory committee.

Actions

F 1.1: Establish a process to investigate the feasibility and budget implications for new initiatives and pathway for presenting findings to the Board of Supervisors for consideration or approval.

F 1.2: Meet monthly with program managers to discuss budget.

Goal 2. Increase KCD's external funding by 20% within the next three years.

Actions

F 2.1: Conduct thorough research to identify potential external funding sources that align with KCD's core programming.

F 2.2: Develop and implement training modules for Staff related to grant writing and project management.

F 2.3: Develop a library of past grant applications and template language for common grant questions.

F 2.4: Strengthen internal processes for grant reporting to ensure compliance and transparency with funders.

Accountability / Metrics

1. Include monthly finance report at Board of Supervisor meetings.
2. Report annually on external funding sources and leverage rate.
3. Include quarterly finance reporting to advisory committee.

Draft

Recruitment and Retention

Mission

KCD supports a growing, diverse, and vibrant staff by acknowledging the harms of the past while moving forward in a positive, supportive manner.

Goal 1. New staff, board members, and advisory committee members feel prepared and confident in taking on their roles at KCD.

Actions

RR 1.1: Review and update current onboarding process for Staff, Board, and Advisory Committee. Provide comprehensive onboarding with information about each program and district procedures and processes.

RR 1.2: Complete update to employee handbook.

RR 1.3: Create Board of Supervisors handbook for process and procedures including roles and responsibilities.

RR 1.4: Develop comprehensive Board of Supervisor onboarding to include tours of KCD work and team/program presentations on various topics at Board meetings.

RR 1.5: Quarterly update organization chart.

Goal 2. All programs are adequately budgeted and staffed to meet service and equity expectations.

Draft

RR 2.1: Assess salary levels for entry-level positions.

RR 2.2: Review policies related to pay differentials for language skills other than English.

RR 2.3: Research and implement best/promising practices for staff retention.

Goal 3. KCD's staff, Board of Supervisors, and Advisory Committee reflect the diversity of King County.

RR 3.1: Increase direct source recruitment efforts geared towards individuals who are least represented within KCD.

RR 3.2: Expand outreach efforts through partnerships with community organizations, diversity-focused job boards, and professional networks.

RR 3.3: Provide unconscious bias training to all hiring managers and interviewers.

RR 3.4: Foster partnerships with educational institutions to build pipelines for talent.

Accountability / Metrics

1. Complete quarterly updates to organization chart and KCD leadership matrix.
2. Report on staff retention and track retention rates.
3. Report on hiring practices including where job opportunities posted and partnerships with professional networks or higher learning institutions.

Draft

APPENDIX A: JAMBOARD ACTIVITIES

KCD Retreat: 3/25/22

https://jamboard.google.com/d/124GGzadt_LOp4GwQbsPnarc0YLM6SwqNW1tZHqM_s90/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Planning Committee Meetings: 6/27/22-11/21/22

https://jamboard.google.com/d/16s_95f8X_1CRJGWmGpXTCR36nJ5s1q-BGbvz7HYf9ZY/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Advisory Committee Meeting: Survey results feedback, Mission, Vision, Wishlist Activity 8/9/22 and 9/13/22

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1gDqXY2bnzHeYm5ObYWDS_Yfa3AISvkDFzOAZqavX710/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Board of Supervisors Meetings: Survey results feedback, Mission, Vision, Wishlist Activity 8/22/22 and 9/26/22

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1NLrqun4OtWZKJL7aBZEFnQExvq24_QvnhtvJmdi7rCU/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Planning Committee Meeting: Selecting Internal and External Focus Areas 10/10/22

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1DtwMECQ6NdNrZbHgfLxA--DVQinViwajUcx16pRyCJs/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Advisory Committee Meeting: Feedback on Internal/External Focus Areas 10/11/22

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1ASy1mfmRc9IZbp86qQZvUslJMaB3ivEMC1VMgbEwVQc/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Staff Meeting: Feedback on Draft Mission and Vision Statements 11/22/22

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1SICmExaImSRscPcVXQDmkIQkvhyW2cxVAwbLgbG61hM/edit?usp=sharing

Draft

KCD Staff Meetings: Survey results feedback, Mission, Vision, Values and Wishlist Activity 8/16/22, 9/27/22, and 12/20/22

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1yl_gUJwCgM3PDZpHdLcLxUAdrL88daEPPpB4pd2IzwU/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Strategic Planning Workshop: 2/7/23

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1P4NwRHZ9ClPGrJvpkliu36wiKYg3vAWrw--9CqyKp20/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Strategic Planning Prioritization Activity: 2/7/23

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1RVBMKiAuXTgJAtm1ziaiI0UGn_CqJ4UdvSbk66iH7PQ/edit?usp=sharing

KCD Focus Group County Partners: 2/16/23

https://jamboard.google.com/d/17vuJ6g-5WpiZmWcGQFkcV7edSvm1iRtqpBIPYLE1WJc/edit?usp=sharing

Appendix B: Half-day Strategic Planning Content

Excel Document LINK – TAGUETTE

Impact Statements and Program areas LINK – Word document

Draft