



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

February 24, 2015

Motion 14305

Proposed No. 2015-0064.3

Sponsors Upthegrove and Dunn

1 A MOTION providing direction to the conservation futures
2 citizen oversight committee on a priority for allocating
3 conservation futures tax levy funds.

4 WHEREAS, state law declares that it is in the best interest of the state to
5 maintain, preserve, conserve and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space
6 lands for the production of food, fiber and forest crops and to ensures the use and
7 enjoyment of natural resources and scenic beauty for the economic and social well-being
8 of the state and its citizens, and

9 WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.210 authorizes the county to acquire property rights to
10 protect, preserve, maintain, improve, restore, limit the future use of, or other otherwise
11 conserve, selected open space land, farm and agricultural land, and timber land, and

12 WHEREAS, property rights acquired under this authorization are defined as
13 conservation futures, and

14 WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.230 authorizes the use of a property tax levy to fund the
15 acquisition of conservation futures and the maintenance and operation of acquired
16 properties, and

17 WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.240 authorizes counties to establish a special
18 conservation futures fund to which the levy proceeds are credited, and

19 WHEREAS, King County has established a conservation futures tax levy and
20 fund, and

21 WHEREAS, King County is required to establish a process to help ensure, over
22 time, that the distribution of the tax levy is throughout the county, and

23 WHEREAS, K.C.C. chapter 26.12 establishes an annual process for distribution
24 of the tax levy to acquire open space lands, including green spaces, greenbelts, wildlife
25 habitat and trail rights-of-way, and

26 WHEREAS, the process includes a citizen oversight committee that makes
27 project and funding allocation recommendations for each project to the executive, and

28 WHEREAS, the executive makes a project and funding recommendation as part
29 of the budget process, and

30 WHEREAS, King County has entered into an interlocal agreement with the King
31 County flood control district to provide services to the district, and as service provider to
32 the district is working with the district to complete a system-wide improvement
33 framework ("SWIF") for the Green river, and

34 WHEREAS, the Green river SWIF will improve flood protection for current and
35 future generations, in a way that builds economic, ecological and community resiliency,
36 and

37 WHEREAS, the Green-Duwamish river watershed is home to salmonid species
38 listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, valuable agricultural resource lands,
39 regional transportation infrastructure, and recreational trail networks, and
40 commercial/industrial economic assets that contribute to over one-eighth of Washington
41 state's annual gross domestic product, and

42 WHEREAS, the lower Green river has been highly developed and engineered
43 over time, with approximately seventy-five percent of the floodplain covered with
44 impervious surfaces, and

45 WHEREAS, the King County flood control district manages approximately
46 eighteen miles of levees along the lower Green river, and

47 WHEREAS, the SWIF process is a collaboration with the King County flood
48 control district; the county; the cities of Tukwila, Renton, Kent and Auburn; the
49 Muckleshoot Indian Tribe; state agencies; federal agencies; water resource inventory area
50 9; the business community including Boeing, Washington Realtors, Master Builders
51 Association and NAIOP Commercial Real Estate Development Association; and
52 environmental groups including the Nature Conservancy and American Rivers, and

53 WHEREAS, vegetation overhanging the river provides many habitat benefits for
54 salmonids, including protection from birds and other predators from above; providing
55 shade from solar radiation; keeping water temperatures down; providing prey in the form
56 of terrestrial insects to promote growth; and contributing large woody debris over the
57 long-term to the system, and

58 WHEREAS, there is very limited tree cover in the majority of the lower Green
59 river and it is important to restore riparian tree cover wherever possible to promote
60 shading and cover, and

61 WHEREAS, high water temperatures are a chronic problem in the lower Green
62 river, which leads to die-off of endangered salmonid species, and

63 WHEREAS, there are opportunities to improve shade conditions throughout the
64 lower Green river system by restoring shade trees and other riparian vegetation, and

65 WHEREAS, the conservation futures allocation process requires a project to be
66 sponsored and forwarded by the jurisdiction in which the project is located, either
67 individually or in partnership with other jurisdictions because of shared interests, and

68 WHEREAS, there are opportunities along the lower Green river to partner with
69 cities, tribes local landowners and businesses to complete a project or projects that will
70 preserve open space and provide shading vegetation along the edge of the river, and

71 WHEREAS, submittal of specific projects and locations along the lower Green
72 river, for preservation and restoration of riparian habitat, should be based on best
73 available science, and

74 WHEREAS, K.C.C. 26.12.010 allows the council to adopt a motion providing
75 direction to the conservation futures citizen oversight committee on priorities for
76 evaluating project applications, and

77 WHEREAS, K.C.C. 26.12.025 establishes criteria for conservation futures project
78 selection, which provides: "wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve; salmon habitat and
79 aquatic resources; scenic resources; community separator; historic or cultural resources;
80 urban passive-use natural area or greenbelt; park or open space system addition; and
81 transfer of development rights program implementation. Additional criteria may include:
82 passive recreation; education/interpretive opportunity; threat of loss of open space
83 resources; ownership complexity; partnerships; stewardship and maintenance; and any
84 other criteria consistent with RCW 84.34.020," and

85 WHEREAS, use of conservation future tax levy funds for purchase of property
86 rights for preservation and restoration of riparian habitat meets the criteria in K.C.C.
87 26.12.025 for project selection, and

88 WHEREAS, the use of conservation future tax levy funds for the purpose of
89 preservation and restoration of riparian habitat is not intended to meet funding obligations
90 for mitigation requirements arising out of capital projects that are not projects funded by
91 the conservation future tax levy;

92 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT MOVED by the Council of King County:

93 A. The council establishes as a priority for the conservation futures citizen
94 oversight committee's consideration during the annual project selection and funding
95 recommendation process, one or more projects that includes the purchase of property
96 rights for the purpose of riparian habitat preservation and restoration along the lower
97 Green river, to preserve existing stands and allow planting of large trees to provide shade
98 to the river.

99 B. The department of natural resources and parks, water and land resources
100 division, is requested to work with local landowners and jurisdictions in which properties
101 reflecting this priority are located, in submitting project proposals that meet this priority,

102 as part of the 2015 conservation futures tax levy funds selection process provided for in
103 K.C.C. 26.12.010.
104

Motion 14305 was introduced on 2/2/2015 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 2/23/2015, by the following vote:

Yes: 8 - Mr. Phillips, Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Lambert,
Mr. Dunn, Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski and Mr. Upthegrove
No: 0
Excused: 1 - Ms. Hague

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Larry Phillips, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None