



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

Motion 16436

Proposed No. 2023-0314.2

Sponsors Dembowski and Upthegrove

1 A MOTION requesting the executive to develop and
2 transmit a study regarding state forest trust lands currently
3 managed for King County by the Washington state
4 Department of Natural Resources.

5 WHEREAS, forests provide multiple benefits on both the local and global scale,
6 and

7 WHEREAS, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has stated that
8 forest management activities play a key role in the mitigation of climate change, and the
9 Washington state Legislature has found that forests are one of the most effective
10 resources that can absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, and

11 WHEREAS, King County's 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan states that there
12 are substantial carbon and climate benefits to maintaining, protecting, restoring, and
13 expanding the more than 811,000 acres of forest land in King County, and that recent
14 studies combining carbon sequestration potential and risk of loss due to wildfire, insects,
15 and disease rank the coastal and Cascade forests of Oregon and Washington among the
16 highest priority for protection, and

17 WHEREAS, in 2021, the executive developed a 30-Year Forest Plan, which lays
18 out priorities and goals associated with King County's forests, as well as strategies for
19 achieving those over the next thirty years, and

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20 WHEREAS, in addition to greenhouse gas mitigation benefits, the 30-Year Forest
21 Plan states that King County's forests provide benefits to human health, salmon habitat,
22 and water quality and quantity, in addition to the economic benefits of sustainable timber,
23 and

24 WHEREAS, twenty-one counties deeded roughly 546,000 acres of forest lands to
25 the state during the 1920s and 1930s, and, in exchange, the state committed to managing
26 the properties as trust lands and giving most of the revenue from timber sales and other
27 revenue-producing activities back to the county and junior taxing districts, and

28 WHEREAS, the state has managed the state forest trust lands within King County
29 to balance economic, environmental, and recreational interests for nearly one hundred
30 years, and

31 WHEREAS, in 2023, the governor signed into law Substitute House Bill 1460,
32 which became Chapter 383, Laws of Washington 2023, and which established a new trust
33 land transfer program, through which the Washington state Department of Natural
34 Resources is authorized to transfer state forest trust lands to other public agencies, such
35 as King County, and

36 WHEREAS, there are other mechanisms allowable under state law with which the
37 state can transfer, sell, or otherwise convey state forest trust lands to local government
38 ownership, and

39 WHEREAS, today, some of the state forest trust lands in King County may better
40 serve the community if owned or managed by the county, and

41 WHEREAS, local ownership or management of state forest trust lands in King
42 County would enable the county to have a greater role in decision-making processes,

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43 ensuring that the interests and needs of county residents are addressed to the fullest extent
44 possible, and maximizing transparency and inclusivity, and

45 WHEREAS, local ownership or management of state forest trust lands in King
46 County would also provide opportunities for enhanced collaboration between the county,
47 local governments, and community groups, fostering partnerships that support sustainable
48 forest management, economic growth, and public health, and

49 WHEREAS, the King County's ownership or management of state forest trust
50 lands in King County would strengthen the county's ability to protect and enhance natural
51 resources, implement innovative forest management practices and conservation strategies
52 that combat climate change, promote outdoor recreation, provide green jobs, and foster a
53 deeper connection between the community and the land, and

54 WHEREAS, county residents may be best served by some of the state forest trust
55 lands remaining under state ownership and management as working forests, continuing to
56 provide reliable, long-term timber supply for homes, hospitals, and schools, revenue for
57 the county, and green jobs for residents;

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

59 A. The council requests that the executive develop a study for state forest trust
60 lands currently managed for King County by the Washington state Department of Natural
61 Resources ("county trust lands"). The study should include, but not be limited to, the
62 following:

63 1. A review of all methods allowable under state law for county trust lands to be
64 transferred from state ownership to county ownership, and a discussion of the specific
65 benefits and risks to King County associated with each method. The methods may

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66 include, but are not limited to, reconveyance, trust land transfer, direct transfer, and land
67 exchange;

68 2. A discussion of the potential short-term and long-term benefits and risks to
69 the county of taking ownership of some or all county trust lands, including but not limited
70 to environmental, health, equity and social justice, and financial or fiscal issues;

71 3. Identification of tribal governments that, as comanagers of forest lands, shall
72 be consulted when considering transfer of lands through any of the methods identified in
73 subsection A.1. of this motion;

74 4. Information on the amount of revenue generated for the county over the past
75 decade through the Washington state Department of Natural Resources's management
76 activities;

77 5. An evaluation of whether county management of county trust lands would
78 support existing county efforts, including the Strategic Climate Action Plan, 30-Year
79 Forest Plan, Clean Water Healthy Habitat Initiative, Parks Open Space Plan, Land
80 Conservation Initiative, and salmon recovery efforts;

81 6. For each parcel or contiguous block of parcels of county trust lands:
82 a. the location of the land and size;
83 b. the forest type and age class;
84 c. identification of any recreational or other non-forestry uses currently present
85 on the land;

86 d. any available information on logging that has taken place in recent decades,
87 including dates and amounts of timber logged;

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88 e. an assessment of the conservation and recreation value of land, including but
89 not limited to:

90 (1) what benefits acquisition of the land would provide to the county and its
91 residents;

92 (2) which means of transfer identified in the analysis requested by section
93 A.1. of this motion is recommended; and

94 f. a recommendation by the executive on which parcels should be prioritized
95 for acquisition;

96 7. Estimated timeframes for any transfers county trust lands identified under
97 section A.6.f. of this section;

98 8. If a land exchange method is recommended as a means of transfer, an
99 identification of what criteria the county would use to identify county-owned lands to be
100 exchanged;

101 9. An estimate of the annual operations and maintenance costs for acquired
102 county trust lands, and any other ongoing costs and lost or gained revenues associated
103 with county ownership of these lands, including the feasibility of generating revenues
104 through carbon credit sales, selective thinning for forest health, or other means;

105 10. For any county trust lands recommended to remain in state ownership, a list
106 of potential strategies for cooperatively maximizing the environmental, social, and
107 economic benefits of the forests contained therein in close collaboration with the
108 Washington state Department of Natural Resources; and

109 11. Recommendations on any changes to state laws or rules related to
110 reconveyance that would be necessary to align with the county's priorities and goals

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111 relating to forest conservation. Recommended changes may include, but should not be
112 limited to, changes to the requirement in RCW 79.22.300 that reconveyed lands be used
113 for public park purposes.

114 B. The executive should electronically file the report no later than July 1, 2024,
115 with the clerk of the council, who shall retain an electronic copy and provide an

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- 116 electronic copy to all councilmembers, the council chief of staff, and the lead staff for the
117 transportation, economy and environment committee or its successor.

Motion 16436 was introduced on 9/12/2023 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 10/3/2023, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Balducci, Dembowski, Dunn, Kohl-Welles, Perry, McDermott, Upthegrove, von Reichbauer and Zahilay

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Dave Upthegrove, Chair

ATTEST:

DocuSigned by:



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Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Attachments: None

Certificate Of Completion

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AutoNav: Enabled	Envelope Originator:
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	SEATTLE, WA 98104
	Cherie.Camp@kingcounty.gov
	IP Address: 198.49.222.20

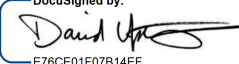
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Signer Events

Dave Upthegrove
dave.upthegrove@kingcounty.gov
Chair
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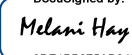
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ID: bac4fa43-f540-473c-8c5c-841363ba3df2

Melani Hay
melani.hay@kingcounty.gov
Clerk of the Council
King County Council
Security Level: Email, Account Authentication (None)

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Agent Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Intermediary Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Certified Delivery Events	Status	Timestamp
Carbon Copy Events	Status	Timestamp
Witness Events	Signature	Timestamp
Notary Events	Signature	Timestamp
Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps

Envelope Summary Events	Status	Timestamps
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Completed	Security Checked	10/5/2023 12:39:29 PM

Payment Events	Status	Timestamps
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