October 9, 2013

The Honorable Larry Gossett

Chair, King County Council

Room 1200

C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Gossett:

This letter transmits an ordinance that will enable King County to preserve open space for County residents in partnership with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (WADNR) to more efficiently manage public land. This is a standard intergovernmental property transfer agreement.

Under its Conservation Futures program, the County purchased the 28.22-acre Little Si Natural Area, located east of the City of North Bend in unincorporated King County. This purchase is within the approved Mount Si Natural Resources Conservation Area boundary and therefore is eligible for WADNR ownership and management.

When the Little Si Natural Area was purchased, the County documented its intent to transfer Little Si Natural Area to the State under King County Ordinance 7736. This transfer was delayed due to a number of reasons: there had been reorganizations at WADNR as well as the King County Parks and Recreation Division; there were state budgetary constraints that limited WADNR’s ability to accept additional land to manage; and it took time for WADNR and the County to agree on the terms of the transfer. As intended in Ordinance 7736, this legislation will allow the County to transfer ownership of and responsibility for this site, while safeguarding open space for the public.

This agreement meets the King County Strategic Plan’s environmental sustainability goal by safeguarding open space for County residents. It also meets the Plan’s financial stewardship goal by partnering with WADNR to more efficiently manage public land because the Little Si Natural Area is a small parcel adjacent to the much larger Mount Si Natural Resources Conservation Area owned and managed by WADNR.

Under the terms and conditions of this agreement, the County will receive no payment from WADNR for the property transfer in exchange for WADNR’s obligation to continue to preserve and maintain the property for passive recreation. The property also cannot be transferred or conveyed except by an agreement providing that the property continues to be used for passive recreation.

King County and WADNR have agreed that the transfer will take place within 30 days, or as soon thereafter as possible, following execution of the intergovernmental land transfer agreement by both parties.

Thank you for your consideration of this ordinance. This legislation will preserve open space and more effectively managing public land for residents of King County.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Kevin Brown, Division Director of

the Parks and Recreation Division of the Department of Natural Resources and Parks,at

206-296-8631.

Sincerely,

Dow Constantine

King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Michael Woywod, Chief of Staff

Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Carrie S. Cihak, Chief Advisor, Policy and Strategic Initiatives, King County  
 Executive Office

Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget

Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Kevin Brown, Division Director, Parks and Recreation Division, DNRP