



King Conservation District

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August 1, 2016

The Honorable Dow Constantine
Executive, King County
King County Chinook Building
401 5th Ave, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104

The Honorable Joe McDermott
Chair, Metropolitan King County Council
Room 1200, Courthouse
516 3rd Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Executive Constantine and Chair McDermott:

Please find attached KCD's *2015 Annual Report* and *2017 Proposed Annual Program of Work and Rates and Charges Budget*. Our Annual Report documents the progress made during our first year of a five-year Implementation Plan under our Inter-Local Agreement with King County. The *2017 Program of Work* outlines Year Three. The focus of KCD's programs is to build a regional, sustainable and equitable food system, improve the health of our forests, neighborhood tree canopies, and shorelines, and ensure clean water for all.

The *2017 Annual Work Program and Rates and Charges Budget* contain the same priority focus areas as in the 2015 and 2016 Programs, with roughly the same budget levels. The priority focus areas were identified through the 2013 KCD Task Force process. They were further refined by the KCD Advisory Committee prior to approval by the King Conservation District Board of Supervisors and the King County Council last year.

Working hand in hand with King County, the KCD Advisory Committee and other partners, KCD made significant progress in its new programs and services in 2015, including:

- In **Regional Food**, KCD made over \$250,000 in early investments for rural farmers and awarded over \$663,000 in regional food grants in the 2015 cycle. 2015 Early Action projects included working with the City of Seattle to expand the Fresh Bucks voucher program for farmers markets in King County, launching the Snoqualmie Valley Farmers Cooperative, and working with WaCan to distribute nearly 400 Good Food bags of local produce to low income residents in Auburn.

- The **Urban Forestry** program identified and developed urban forestry services to 8 cities. KCD's milestone was for 3 cities per year; however, by working with city staff and the KCD Advisory Committee, staff were able to modify the program to serve more city partners.
- The **Shoreline** program is being enhanced to provide greater outreach to cities to assist with identifying stewardship and conservation opportunities of the highest value on private property in proximity to every city.
- Demand for KCD's soil testing services has exploded due to new demand related to **Urban Agriculture** education and outreach programs by KCD staff, with KCD processing nearly 1,400 soil samples in 2015, compared to 359 in 2014.
- **Rural Agriculture** lands benefited from a partnership between King County and the KCD that resulted in agriculture drainage projects that cleared more than two miles of channels on five farms in the Snoqualmie Valley, bringing 75 new acres of key farmland back into production and improving drainage on 407 acres.
- On private **Rural Forest** land, KCD in partnership with landowners treated and planted over 225 acres of small lot rural forest. KCD also expanded its support for small lot private forest land owners by offering assistance with planning and implementing best management practices. The goal is to create opportunities for contiguous holdings of managed forest.

We look forward to presenting the *2015 Annual Report* and *2017 Program of Work* at the August 17th King County Council Committee of the Whole. In the meantime, if we can answer questions, provide information, or be of assistance please let me or the KCD staff know.

Thank you again for your continued support of our goal to create **better ground** in King County.

Regards,



Dick Ryon
Chair, Board of Supervisors
King Conservation District

cc:

Councilmember Balducci
Councilmember Dembowski
Councilmember Dunn
Councilmember Gossett
Councilmember Kohl-Welles
Councilmember Lambert
Councilmember von Reichbauer
Councilmember Upthegrove
Ann Noris, Clerk of the Council

Bill Knutsen, Vice-chair, KCD Board
Max Prinsen, Auditor, KCD Board
Jim Haack, KCD Board