

**OFFICE OF THE HEARING EXAMINER  
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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION  
TO THE KING COUNTY COUNCIL ON  
FOR CURRENT USE ASSESSMENT**

SUBJECT: Department of Natural Resources and Parks file no. **E25CT001**  
Proposed ordinance no. **2026-0003**  
Parcel no/s. **282408-9037 and 282408-9056**

**MARK NEWCOMB AND KATHY SEAMON**

Application for Current Use Assessment under the Public Benefit Rating System

Location: 41710 SE 66th Street, Snoqualmie

Applicants: **Mark Newcomb and Kathy Seamon**  
41710 SE 66th Street  
Snoqualmie, WA 98065  
Telephone: (408) 375-7211  
Email: [mark.newcomb@live.com](mailto:mark.newcomb@live.com)

King County: Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
*represented by* **Bill Bernstein**  
201 S. Jackson Street Suite 5601  
Seattle, WA 98104  
Telephone: (206) 477-4643  
Email: [bill.bernstein@kingcounty.gov](mailto:bill.bernstein@kingcounty.gov)

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

**Department's Recommendation:** Approve 60% reduction in taxable value for 3.67 acres on parcel 282408-9037 and 3.27 acres on parcel 282408-9056.

**Examiner's Recommendation:** Approve 60% reduction in taxable value for 3.67 acres on parcel 282408-9037 and 3.27 acres on parcel 282408-9056; Contingent approval of an additional 10% reduction if conditions of forest stewardship category are met by December 31, 2026.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND:

Per Ch. 20.36 KCC, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) transmitted the subject application along with its Report for Property Enrollment in the Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs) File No. E25CT001, to the Examiner.

On February 26, 2026, the Examiner conducted a remote public hearing on the application. Bill Bernstein, representing DNRP, presented the application and DNRP's recommendation.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

1. Except as modified herein, the facts set forth in DNRP's staff report and testimony at the February 26, 2026, public hearing are correct and incorporated here by reference. We will provide copies of this report and DNRP's staff report to the King County Council for final approval.
2. The property at issue is at 41710 SE 66th Street, Snoqualmie, Parcel Nos 282408-9037 and 282408-9056, owned by the Applicants Mark Newcomb and Kathy Seamon.
3. The Applicants timely filed an application with King County for current use assessment of the above identified property under the PBRs to begin in 2026.
4. On January 9, 2026, timely and proper legal notice of the public hearing on the application was provided.
5. The property is currently enrolled in the Designated Forestland program (RCW 84.33). The landowners have applied to PBRs as they no longer intend to manage the property for commercial timber purposes. The purpose of this application is to reclassify the property and enroll it in PBRs.
6. A list of the PBRs Open Space Resource categories requested by the Applicants and identified by DNRP as relevant to the property are provided below. Categories that DNRP determined were eligible (or eligible with contingencies) for credit are marked with an asterisk and assigned the applicable number of points.

PBRs categories:	Forest stewardship land	*
	Rural open space	5
	Significant wildlife or fish habitat	5
	Surface water quality buffer	0
	Watershed protection area	5
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	Total points awarded	15

The DNRP-recommended score of 15 points results in a 60% reduction in the taxable value of the enrolled portion of the property. Each category with DNRP recommended points is discussed below.

7. **Rural open space – 5 points.** The property is in the rural area and contains nearly seven acres of contiguous forested open space, which is more than the category's required five acre minimum.
8. **Significant wildlife or salmonid habitat – 5 points.** Based on DNRP's site visit, the property contains habitat for numerous wildlife species, including foraging and nesting habitat for the pileated woodpecker, which is identified in King County's Comprehensive Plan as a Species of Local Importance (E-328(e)). The property meets the criteria for having priority habitat, per KCC 20.36.100.C.16.a and KCC 20.36.100, section B.15.a(1).
9. **Watershed protection area – 5 points.** The property to be enrolled contains 6.94 acres of native forest cover which is more than 65% of the total property acreage and there are no additional forest retention regulations in place for this property. These characteristics qualify the property for credit in this category.
10. **Contingencies, Conditions, and Requirements.**
  - A. The property contains nearly seven acres of contiguous forest which could be managed under a forest stewardship plan. At this time, credit for this category cannot be recommended because a plan has not been provided.
  - B. However, if a forest stewardship plan is provided by December 1, 2026, and approved by the department on or before December 31, 2026, then credit for this category should be awarded administratively. It is the owner's responsibility to apply for and receive the necessary approvals from the applicable state and local governmental agencies for forestry activities that require a permit or approval.
  - C. If the forest stewardship land category is awarded, the property would qualify for 20 points, and a 30% reduction in the taxable value of the enrolled property.
  - D. Award of this category requires an annual progress report from the owner (see below, Section B. 12.), which should be sent to PBRS staff by either email or other agreed method.
  - E. Award of points under all categories requires ongoing control and removal of invasive plant species and noxious weeds on the property.
  - F. All other requirements as listed in DNRP's staff report are incorporated.
11. **Enrollment Acreage.** The Applicants requested 4.07 acres on parcel 282408-9037 and 4.57 acres on parcel 282408-9056. DNRP recommends 3.67 acres on parcel 282408-9037 and 3.27 acres on parcel 282408-9056 be enrolled in the PBRS program. (Enrollment acreage is the entire parcel less the excluded area, as calculated by DNRP. In the event the County Assessor's official parcel size is revised, the PBRS acreage shall be administratively adjusted to reflect that change.)
12. Approval of 15 points and a current use valuation of 60% reduction in appraised value for 3.67 acres on parcel 282408-9037 and 3.27 acres on parcel 282408-9056, with the

potential to increase the reduction to 70% with approval of a forest stewardship plan, is consistent with Ch. 20.36 KCC and with the purposes and intent of King County to maintain, preserve, conserve, and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space lands and to assure the use and enjoyment of natural resources and scenic beauty for the economic and social well-being of King County and its citizens.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. APPROVE a current use valuation of 60% of assessed value for 3.67 acres on parcel 282408-9037 and 3.27 acres on parcel 282408-9056, subject to the requirements as set forth herein and in DNRP's staff report.
2. CONDITIONALLY APPROVE additional credit, to be applied administratively, for the forest stewardship land category, subject to submission of a forest stewardship plan by December 1, 2026, and subsequent DNRP approval of that plan by December 31, 2026. Award of credit under this category will increase the point total by 5 points, resulting in a 70% reduction in the taxable value for the enrolled portion of the property.

DATED March 5, 2026.



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Devon Shannon  
Hearing Examiner

**NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL**

A party may appeal an Examiner report and recommendation by following the steps described in KCC 20.22.230. By **4:30 p.m.** on **March 30, 2026**, an electronic appeal statement must be sent to [Clerk.Council@kingcounty.gov](mailto:Clerk.Council@kingcounty.gov), to [hearingexaminer@kingcounty.gov](mailto:hearingexaminer@kingcounty.gov), and to the party email addresses on the front page of this report and recommendation. Please consult KCC 20.22.230 for the exact filing requirements.

If a party fails to timely file an appeal, the Council does not have jurisdiction to consider that appeal. Conversely, if the appeal requirements of KCC 20.22.230 are met, the Examiner will notify parties and interested persons and will provide information about next steps in the appeal process.

**MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 26, 2026, HEARING ON THE APPLICATION OF  
MARK NEWCOMB AND KATHY SEAMON, FILE NO. E25CT001**

Devon Shannon was the Hearing Examiner in this matter. A verbatim recording of the hearing is available in the Hearing Examiner's Office.

The following exhibits were offered by DNRP and entered into the record:

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| Exhibit no. 1 | DNRP report to the Hearing Examiner   |
| Exhibit no. 2 | <i>Reserved for future submission of the affidavit of hearing publication</i> |
| Exhibit no. 3 | Legal notice and introductory ordinance to the King County Council            |
| Exhibit no. 4 | Arcview/orthophotograph and aerial map  |
| Exhibit no. 5 | Application signed and notarized  |