



**King County**  
**Metropolitan King County Council**  
**Committee of the Whole**

**STAFF REPORT**

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<b>Agenda Item No.:</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>8 Apr 2009</b>
<b>Proposed Ordinance No.:</b>	<b>2009-0245</b>	<b>Prepared by:</b>	<b>Nick Wagner</b>

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**SUMMARY**

Proposed Ordinance 2009-0245 (Attachment 1, pp. 9-12 of these materials) would place on the November 2009 general election ballot a charter amendment recommended by the 2007-2008 King County Charter Review Commission (“CRC”). The Open Space Amendment (OSA), as it is known, would create, as an appendix to the King County Charter, a list of selected, “high conservation value” properties that are either owned by the county or subject to conservation easements or development rights held by the county. The amendment would prohibit any of the listed properties from being “conveyed, relinquished or converted to a different use than was authorized at the time of acquisition,” with certain limited exceptions. Addition of properties to the list, or removal from the list, would require an additional charter amendment. A diagram of the ordinance is provided as Attachment 2 (p. 13 of these materials) to make the ordinance easier to follow.

The CRC’s vote on the OSA was 17-2 in favor, with 2 absent. Three CRC members eventually joined in a minority report, which is discussed below at p. 4 of this staff report and is included in these materials at p. 54.

The proposed ordinance is before the committee today for a high-level briefing only. At future committee meetings, Executive staff will brief members on the particular properties that are proposed for protection under the OSA. After those briefings, Proposed Ordinance 2009-0245 will be brought back before the committee for discussion and possible action.

**BACKGROUND**

The OSA was initially presented to the CRC by County Executive Ron Sims, County Director of Environmental Sustainability Rod Brandon, and Cascade Land Conservancy President Gene Duvernoy. The Executive’s transmittal letter to the CRC (p. 67 of these materials) provides the following background regarding the county’s policy of acquiring open space properties:

King County has acquired interests in open space properties in the form of fee simple ownership, conservation easements and development rights. The primary purposes of these acquisitions are to conserve, preserve, protect or enhance natural or scenic resources, timberland devoted primarily to the growth and harvest of timber for commercial purposes, streams, rivers, wetlands or soils, beaches or tidal marshes, fish or wildlife habitat, water quality, passive

recreational opportunities, or visual quality along highway, road and street corridors for current and future generations of King County residents. Preserving open space also reduces urban sprawl, provides natural corridors in urban areas, and serves to mitigate the effects of human activities that contribute to climate change.

The problem that the OSA is intended to address, as described in a Q&A document provided to the CRC by the Executive (pp. 65-66 of these materials), is the anticipated increase in pressure to develop King County's open space properties: "The population of Central Puget Sound is expected to double to more than 7 million people over the next 100 years. Development pressure on King County land will only continue to increase, as will the demand for locally produced food, fiber, and timber." Although the properties that are proposed for protection under the OSA are already protected by restrictions in easements, deeds, or funding grants, a concern was raised about whether these restrictions were adequate to resist future efforts to develop the properties.

The OSA takes a novel approach to environmental protection. According to the Executive, "there is no known provision in a county charter that is similar to the OSA," but the Executive observes that "King County has long been a leader in innovative ways to protect the natural environment." (Executive's Q&A, p. 65 of these materials) (emphasis in original). For example, the Executive points to the county's Farmlands Preservation Program (FPP), which was established by a voter-approved initiative (Ordinance 4341) and which the Executive describes as having been "successfully operating since 1979." The Executive characterizes the FPP as "similar . . . to the OSA" in that "[t]he program permanently protects more than 13,000 acres of county farmland, and requires a public vote to remove a farm from protection." As described by the Executive, "In the 30-year history of the FPP, the protected properties have withstood all challenges and legal battles."

In his OSA Q&A (p. 66 of these materials), the Executive provides an example of how the FPP has helped the county resist increasing pressure to develop open space properties:

In 1994, Lake Washington Youth Soccer Association purchased the 112-acre Muller Farm in Redmond with full awareness of the protective covenants, but with a belief that they could find a way around them. The legal challenges went all the way to the State Supreme Court, which determined that the land must remain agricultural. The FPP's covenants were integral to the Court's decision. The farm is now slated to become a horticultural teaching facility, and the soccer association is developing fields on non-agricultural land.

## **PROPOSED ORDINANCE 2009-0245: THE "OPEN SPACE AMENDMENT"**

If placed on the ballot and approved by the voters in November 2009, Proposed Ordinance 2009-0245 would make two additions to the King County Charter:

1. A new Appendix A (pp. 15-45 of these materials), which would list 95 "high conservation value" properties within the county;<sup>1</sup> and

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<sup>1</sup> Charter section 880 would also be amended, to make it unnecessary for Appendix A to be included in published versions of the King County Code.

2. A new Section 897 (pp. 10-11 of these materials), which would call upon the county to “preserve” the properties listed in Appendix A and would prohibit, with limited exceptions, the conveyance or relinquishment of the properties or the conversion of any of those properties to a use that was not permitted when the county’s interest in the property was originally acquired.

The wording of Proposed Ordinance 2009-0245 (pp. 9-12) differs slightly from the wording proposed by the CRC (p. 50), but the differences are only technical. The intended effect of the proposed ordinance is the same as that of the version recommended by the CRC. Legal review of the proposed ordinance is not yet complete.

### **Executive’s arguments**

The Executive offers the following explanation of why a charter amendment is needed (Executive’s Q&A, p. 65 of these materials):

- a. “A Charter amendment is needed in order to add the additional protection of a majority vote of the people to conservation lands already owned by the county. The OSA would create a 2-step process for removing properties from permanent protection: 1) the Council or the people would have to initiate an amendment to remove the property, and 2) a majority of voters would have to approve the amendment.” (Emphasis in original.)
- b. “A Charter amendment provides a check to changes in county leadership, different political climates, alterations in growth management law, and other forces that could reverse current open space protections.”
- c. “Along with this high level of protection, the OSA also provides government with the flexibility to conduct normal business and confront emergency situations. It is not a total lock on the properties. The Charter could be amended in the future to remove them from Charter protection if the public so desires, or if required for the public good.”

### **Key OSA provisions**

Some of the key provisions of the OSA are:

- i. Removal of a property from protected status under the OSA would require another charter amendment, as would any additions to the list of protected properties;
- ii. The OSA would not require the county to make any new purchases of property or of rights in property—and therefore, according to the Executive, would not entail direct costs for that purpose.
- iii. The OSA would not prohibit any uses of property that were permitted when the county acquired its interest in the property.
- iv. Certain specified, exceptional uses of protected properties would not be prohibited by the OSA, even if they were not permitted when the county acquired its interest in the property.

- v. The OSA exceptions do not allow the county to exchange protected property for high conservation value property that is currently unprotected, even if the effect of such an exchange would be a net increase in the county's inventory of high conservation value properties (for example, if a developer offered the county a property having higher conservation value in exchange for a protected property, the county would not be permitted to accept the offer);

## **CRC MINORITY REPORT**

In a minority report, three CRC members opposed what they characterized as the OSA's "use [of] the King County Charter as the vehicle for regulating the use of specific parcels of real estate." (*See* Attachment 4.d, p. 54 of these materials.) They called this "a dangerous step that undermines the proper role of the charter" and suggested that it "opens the door for charter amendments based on agendas or the politics of the day, rather than defining the structure of county government."

## **COUNCIL OPTIONS**

Options available to the Council include those listed below. Possible arguments for and against each option are also listed, in no particular order; the arguments listed do not necessarily represent the views of actual supporters or opponents of the OSA.

### **1. Adopt Proposed Ordinance 2009-0245, which would place the OSA on the November 2009 general election ballot (implementing the CRC's recommendation).**

- Pro:**
- The OSA would promote conservation by creating a substantial procedural obstacle to removing certain high conservation value properties from protected status.
  - Conservation of natural resources is a basic value that is appropriate for inclusion in the county Charter and for a popular vote on whether particular properties should be protected.
  - Any measure short of a charter amendment would be insufficient to resist temporary changes in the political climate.
  - A benefit of requiring action by charter amendment is that a majority of both the Council and the voters is required, which has the effect of focusing attention on the importance of the issue to be decided, while preserving the principle of majority rule.
  - The OSA includes exceptions that retain necessary flexibility for meeting compelling countervailing needs.
  - In deciding whether to approve the list of properties in proposed Appendix A, voters would rely in part, as they often do, on the views expressed by political leaders and advocacy groups with whom the voters agree or disagree; voters would not need to become familiar with the details of every property.

- Con:**
- Protection of specific properties is not a proper use of the Charter, which should be limited to defining the structure and basic values underlying county government.
  - There are effective alternative means of protecting high conservation value properties—e.g., a charter amendment requiring a supermajority of councilmembers to create or modify a list of protected properties, as described in Option 2 below.
  - The OSA would require voters to make an all-or-nothing choice between protecting all of the properties listed in proposed Appendix A or none of them. – The outcome of such a vote might turn on the merits of including or excluding a particular property on which attention has become focused.
  - Voters will not have the time or inclination to inform themselves about each of the 95 properties in order to decide whether they should be protected. Consequently, the outcome of such a vote might be unduly influenced by whether a particular point of view is well-funded.

**2. Place on the ballot a charter amendment that would require the votes of a Council supermajority, but not a charter amendment, to place a property in protected status or to remove it from that status; the list of protected properties would not become part of the charter.**

- Pro:**
- This option would keep the scope of the Charter limited to defining the structure and basic principles of county government.
  - The Council has the time and resources to examine and assess the suitability of each property that is being proposed for extra protection—and could take legislative action tailored to fit particular properties, rather than having to provide the same protection to a large group of properties, or to none of them.
  - This option would enable a Council supermajority to allow the exchange of a protected high conservation value property for an unprotected property of even higher conservation value.
  - Voters having views about whether particular properties should be protected could communicate those views to councilmembers, rather than being limited to a single vote for or against the entire group of properties.

- Con:**
- Preservation of high conservation value properties is a basic value held by many King County residents and therefore should be enshrined in the Charter.
  - Complex issues appear on the ballot with some regularity, since even a choice between two candidates can involve complex issues; the decision that the OSA would call upon voters to make is not qualitatively different in that regard.

- Supermajority requirements seem undemocratic in allowing a minority to block action supported by the majority.

### 3. Take no action.

- Pro:**
- All the properties that would be protected by the OSA are already protected to some extent by existing restrictions, whether in deeds, easements, funding requirements, or the like.
  - The county’s existing tools for protection of high conservation value properties have produced good results so far.
  - The desire of OSA proponents to guard against the possibility of “different political climates” in the future could be viewed as a desire to enforce views that may no longer be held by a majority, which seems undemocratic.
- Con:**
- Protection of the environment is like protection of free speech, in that a majority of citizens is sometimes opposed to its application in a particular situation, which is why it is essential for environmental protection to be enshrined, like free speech, in the county’s Charter, where it cannot be overruled by ordinance alone.

## NEXT STEPS

At the COW meetings of April 15, 22, and 29, Executive staff have been asked to brief the committee on the particular properties that are proposed for inclusion in Appendix A (or, if councilmembers have questions about them, properties that are proposed for exclusion from Appendix A). Executive staff have also indicated a willingness to brief councilmembers individually.

Proposed Ordinance 2009-0245 is tentatively scheduled for further discussion and possible action at the COW meeting of May 13.

## INVITEES

1. Charter Review Commission members
2. Rod Brandon, Director of Environmental Sustainability, Executive Office
3. Bob Burns, Deputy Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
4. Ingrid Lundin, Project Program Manager, DNRP

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**Signature Report**

**April 5, 2009**

**Ordinance**

**Proposed No.** 2009-0245.1

**Sponsors** Ferguson

1 AN ORDINANCE proposing an amendment to Section 880  
2 of the King County Charter, addition of a new Section 897 to  
3 the King County Charter and addition of a new Charter  
4 Appendix A to the King County Charter, to restrict the  
5 county from conveying or converting uses of specified  
6 county-owned, high conservation value properties except  
7 by an amendment of the charter; and submitting the same to  
8 the voters of the county for their ratification or rejection at  
9 the November 2009 general election.

10  
11 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

12 SECTION 1. There shall be submitted to the voters of King County for their  
13 approval and ratification or rejection, at the next general election to be held in this county  
14 occurring more than forty-five days after the enactment of this ordinance, an amendment  
15 to Section 880 of the King County Charter, addition of a new Section 897 to the King  
16 County Charter and addition of a new Charter Appendix A to the King County Charter:

17 **Section 880 Compilation and Codification of Ordinances.**

18           Within two years after the effective date of this charter and as often thereafter as it  
19           deems necessary, the county council shall provide for a compilation and codification of  
20           all county ordinances and regulations which have the force of law and are permanent or  
21           general in nature. Each codification shall be presented to the county council and, when  
22           adopted by ordinance, shall be known as the "King County Code." It shall be published  
23           together with this charter, excluding the list of inventoried high conservation value  
24           properties maintained under Section 897 of this charter, a detailed index and appropriate  
25           notes, citations and annotations. The county council shall also provide for an annual  
26           supplement.

27           **Section 897. High Conservation Value Properties.**

28           The county shall preserve the high conservation value county real properties listed  
29           on the inventory set forth as Appendix A to this charter. The inventory includes only  
30           properties in which the county has a real property interest. Appendix A shall be retained  
31           by the clerk of the council and available for public inspection and copying. Appendix A  
32           may be revised only by an amendment to this charter. No inventoried county property  
33           interest shall ever be conveyed, relinquished or converted to a different use than was  
34           authorized at the time of acquisition, as evidenced by deed, easement, covenant, contract  
35           or funding source requirements, except that this section shall not prevent: the  
36           conveyance of an inventoried property interest to another government, the conveyance of  
37           an inventoried property interest under the lawful threat or exercise of eminent domain;  
38           the grant of an easement, license, franchise or use agreement for utilities or other  
39           activities compatible with use restrictions in place at the time of acquisition; or the use of  
40           an inventoried property interest for habitat restoration, flood control, low-impact public

**Ordinance**

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41 amenities or regionally significant public facilities developed for purposes related to the  
42 conservation values of the property, road or utility projects or emergency projects  
43 necessary to protect public health, welfare or safety. This section shall not affect any  
44 contractual obligations entered into as part of the county's acquisition of an inventoried  
45 property interest.

46 **Charter Appendix A.** Charter Appendix A, as set forth in Attachment A to this  
47 Ordinance, is hereby adopted.

48 SECTION 2. The clerk of the council shall certify the proposition to the manager  
49 of the elections division, in substantially the following form, with such additions,  
50 deletions or modifications as may be required by the prosecuting attorney:

51 Shall the King County Charter be amended to amend Section 880 and to  
52 add new Section 897 and new Charter Appendix A, which restrict the  
53 county from conveying or converting uses of specified county-owned,  
54

**Ordinance**

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54 high conservation value properties except upon enactment of a charter  
55 amendment?  
56

KING COUNTY COUNCIL  
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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ATTEST:

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APPROVED this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_.

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**Attachments**      A. Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Diagram of the Open Space Amendment

- A. “The county shall preserve the high conservation value county real properties listed on the inventory set forth as Appendix A to this charter.”
- B. “The inventory includes only properties in which the county has a real property interest.”
- C. “Appendix A shall be retained by the clerk of the council and available for public inspection and copying.”
- D. “Appendix A may be revised only by an amendment to this charter.”
- E. “No inventoried county property interest shall ever be”
  - 1. “conveyed,”
  - 2. “relinquished or”
  - 3. “converted to a different use than was authorized at the time of acquisition, as evidenced by deed, easement, covenant, contract or funding source requirements,”
- F. “except that this section shall not prevent:”
  - 1. “the conveyance of an inventoried property interest to another government,”
  - 2. “the conveyance of an inventoried property interest under the lawful threat or exercise of eminent domain;”
  - 3. “the grant of an easement, license, franchise or use agreement for utilities or other activities compatible with use restrictions in place at the time of acquisition; or”
  - 4. “the use of an inventoried property interest for”
    - a. “habitat restoration,”
    - b. “flood control,”
    - c. “low-impact public amenities or regionally significant public facilities developed for purposes related to the conservation values of the property,”
    - d. “road or utility projects or”
    - e. “emergency projects necessary to protect public health, welfare or safety.”
- G. “This section shall not affect any contractual obligations entered into as part of the county's acquisition of an inventoried property interest.”
- H. “Charter Appendix A, as set forth in Attachment A to this Ordinance, is hereby adopted.”

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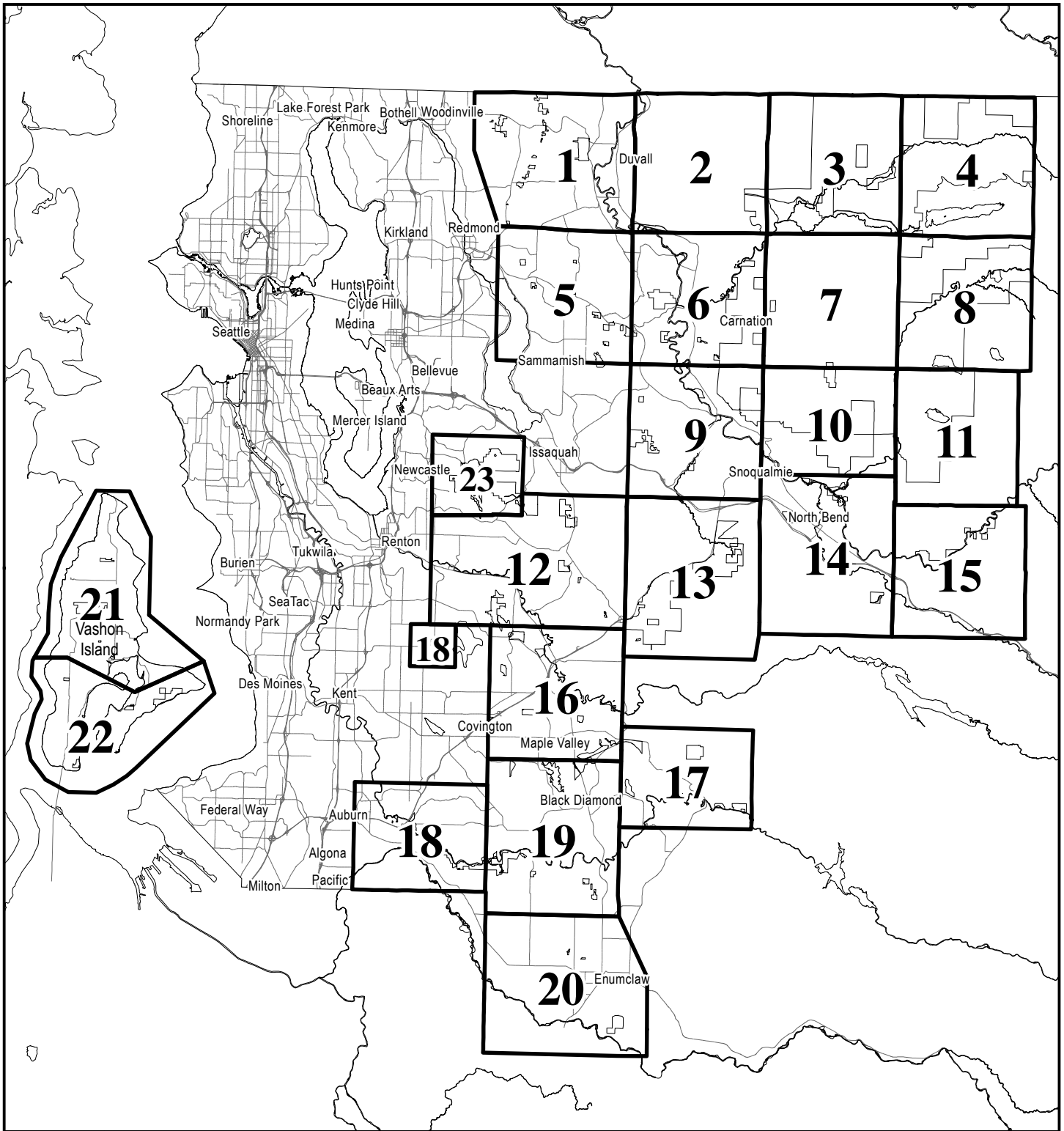










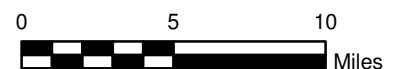


# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

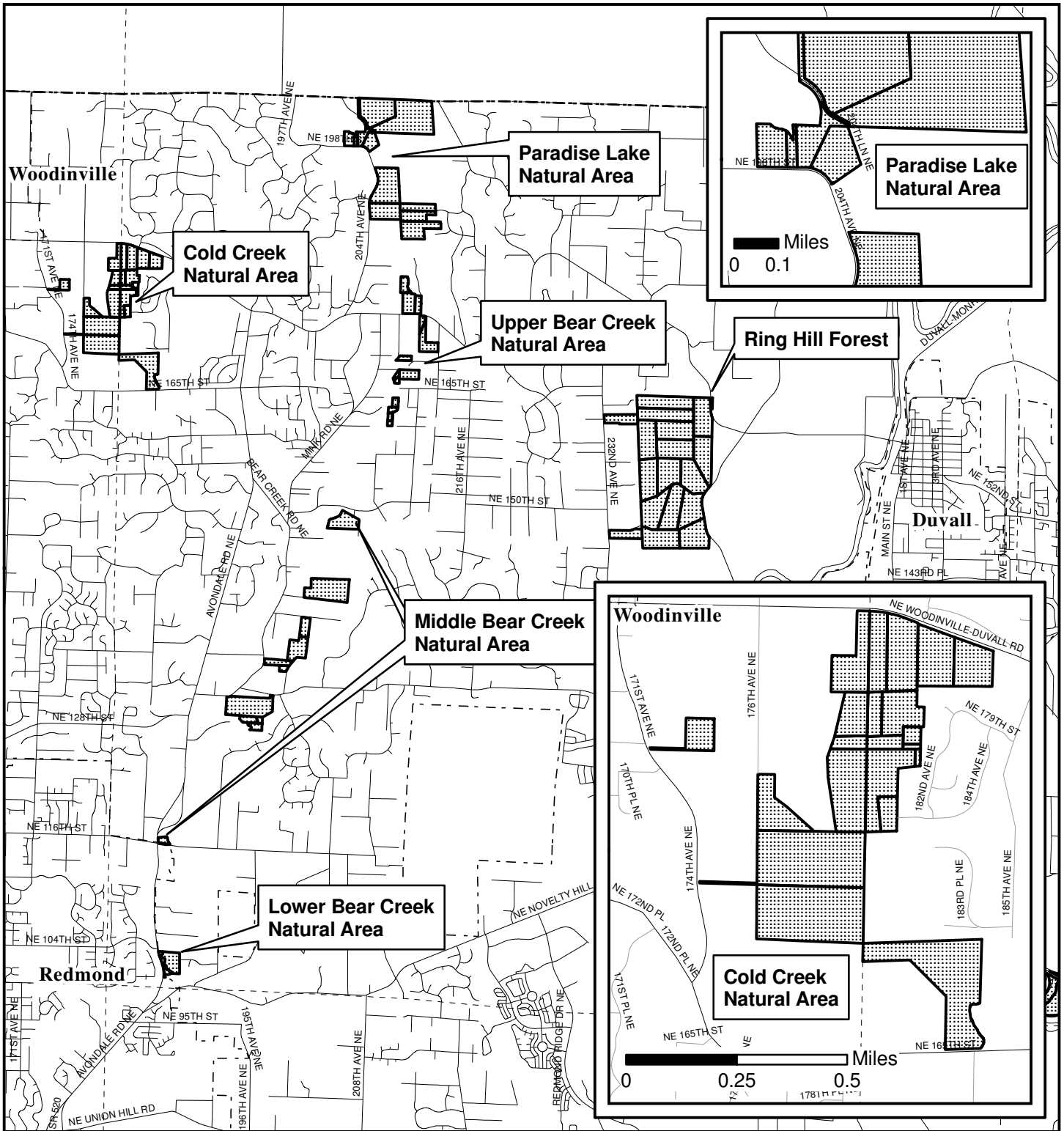
## Index To Maps



June 10, 2008



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


# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 1 - T26-R6

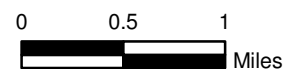


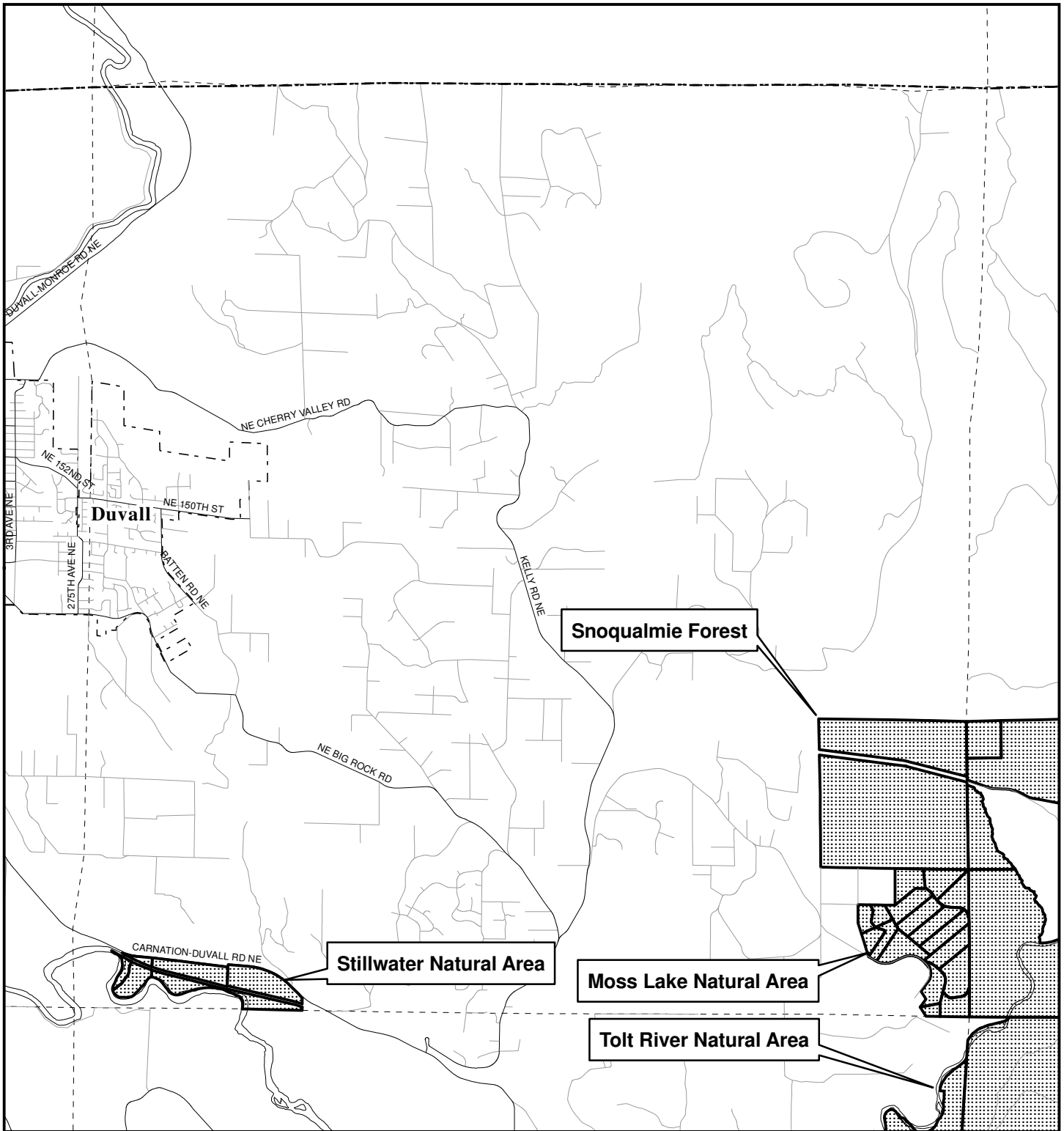
June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines

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



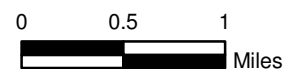
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 2 - T26-R7

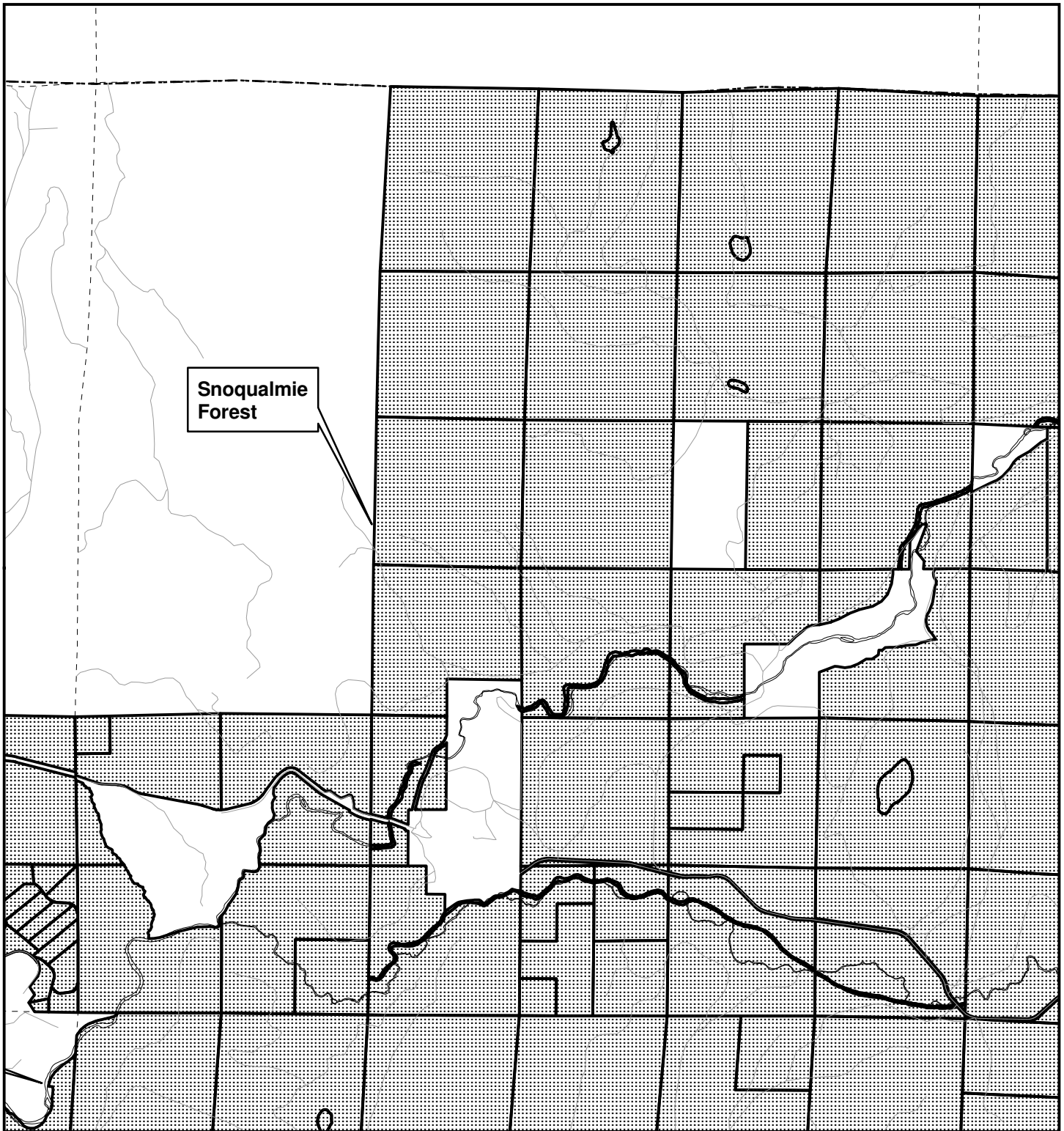


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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


# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map3 - T26-R8

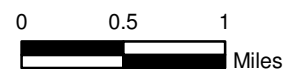


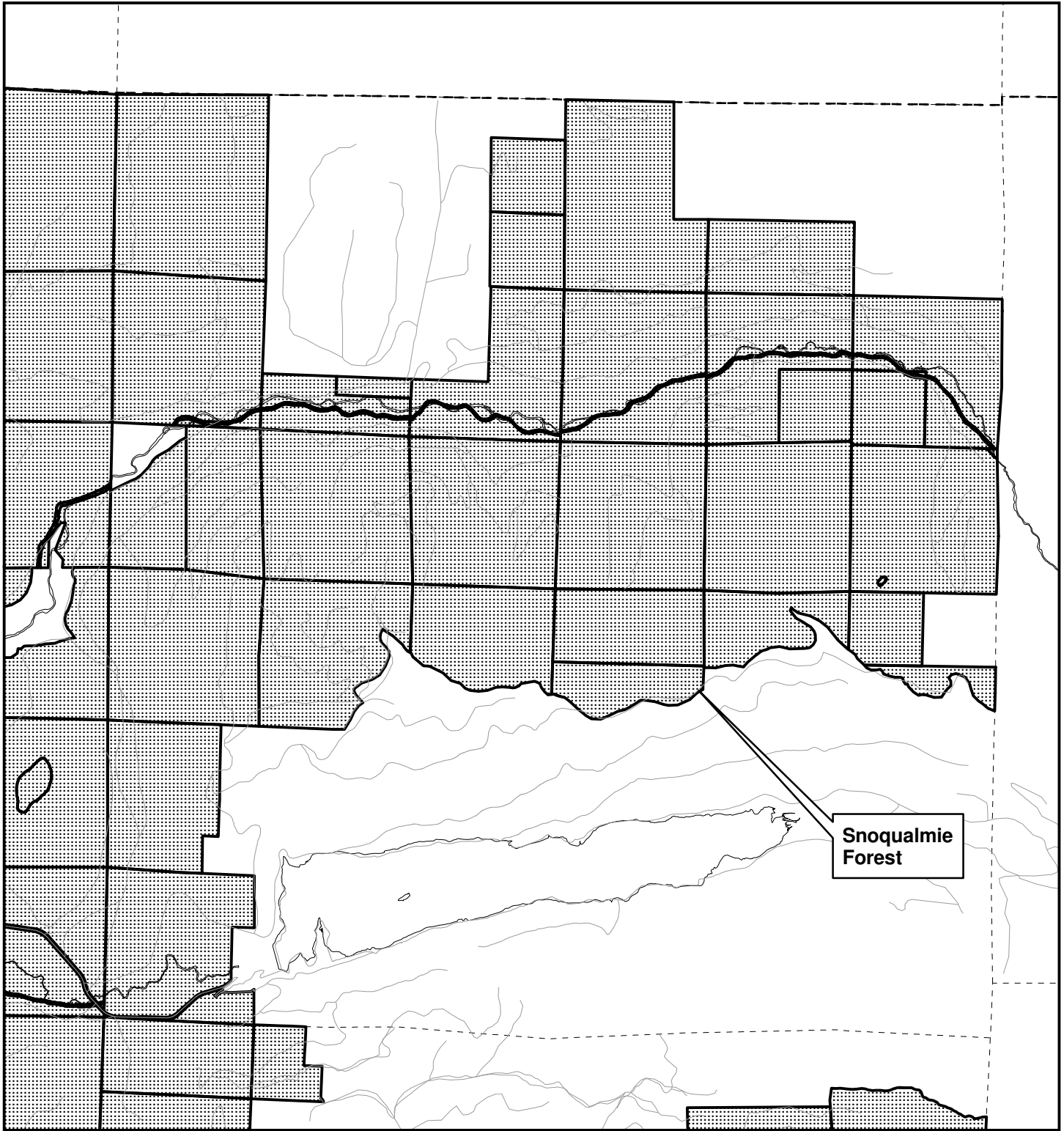
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-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines

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


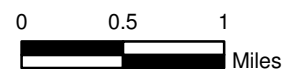
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 4 - T26-R9

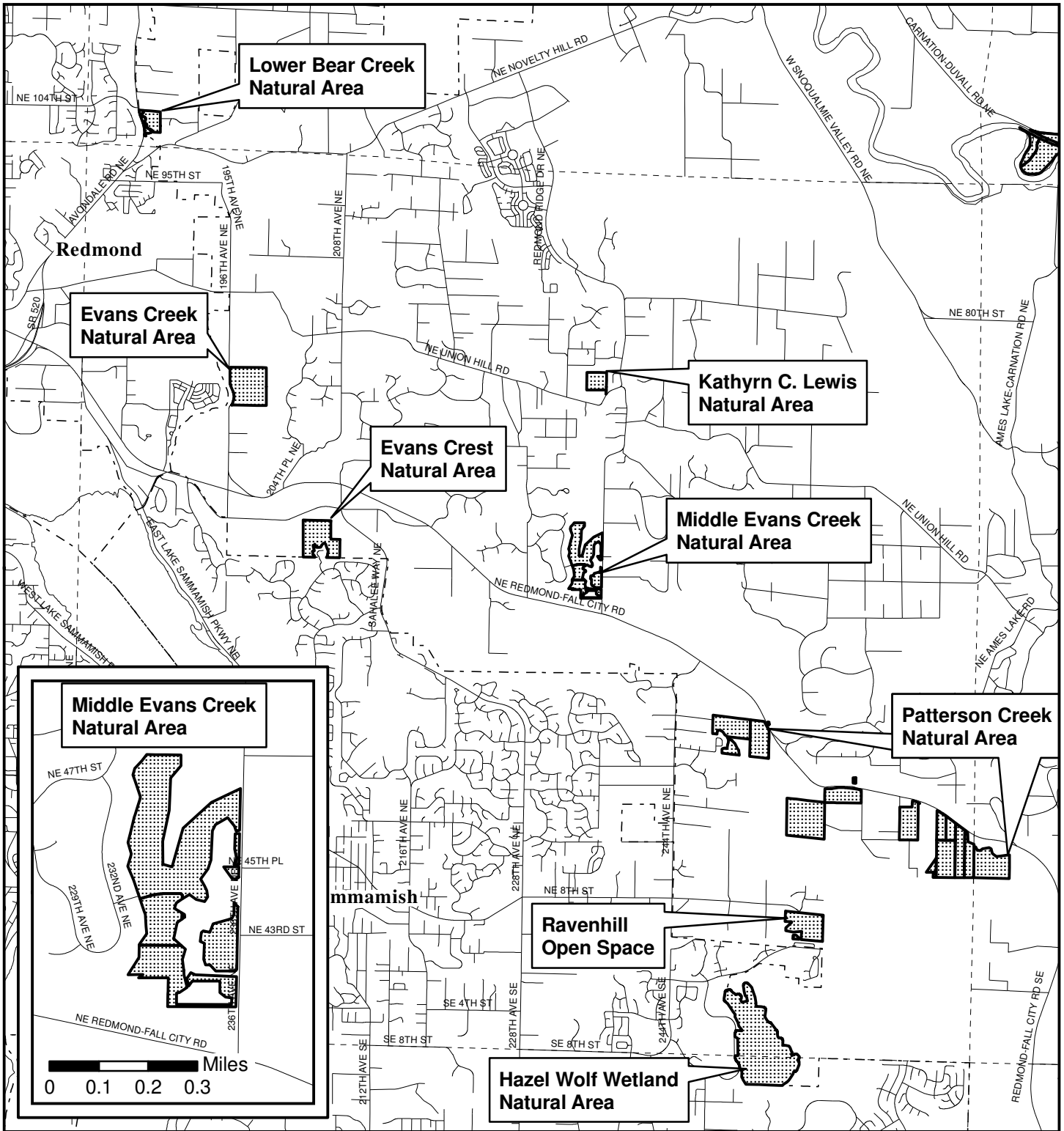


June 30, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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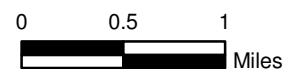
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 5 - T25-R6



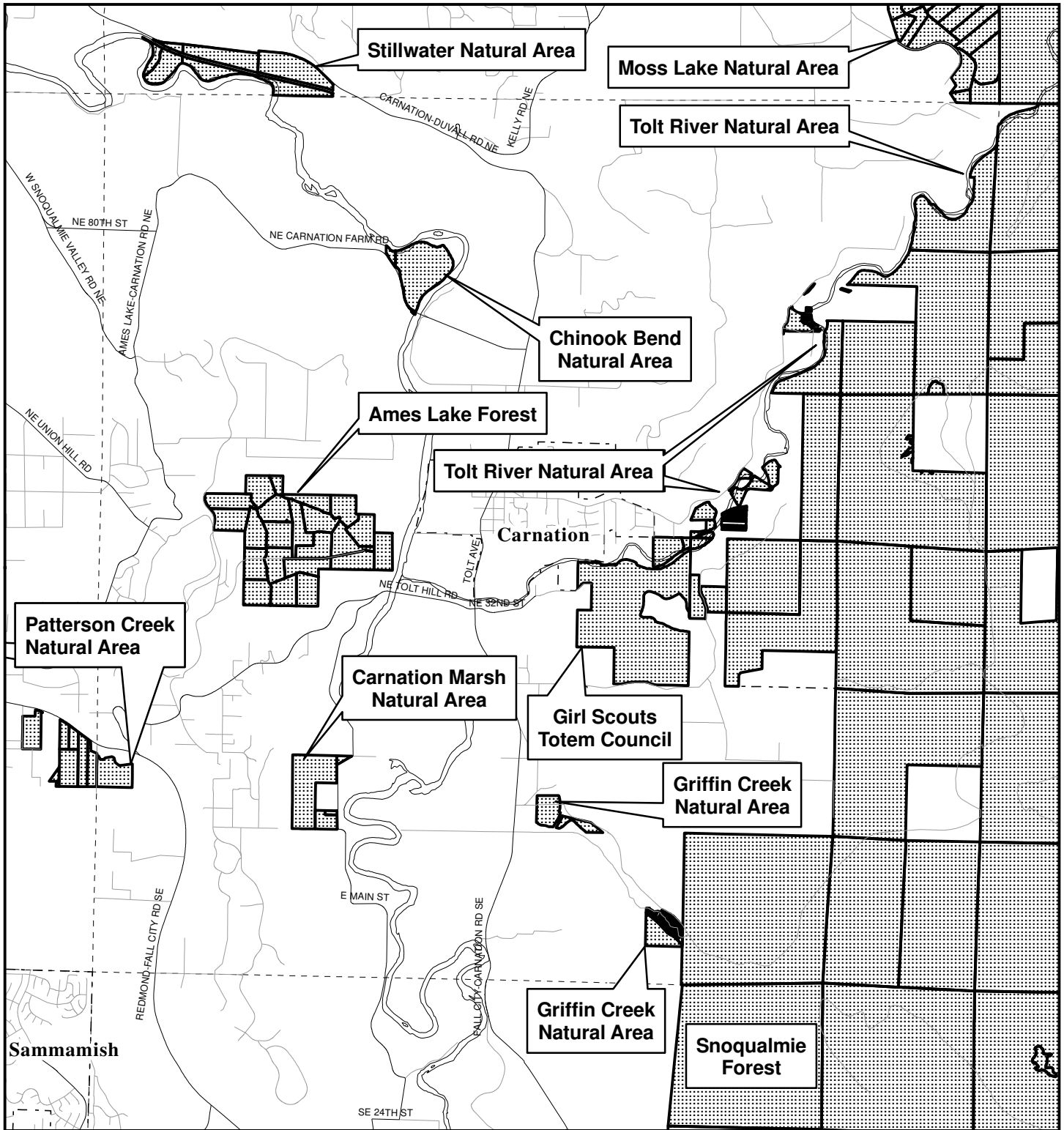
June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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




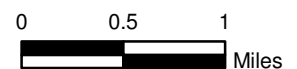
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 6 - T25-R7

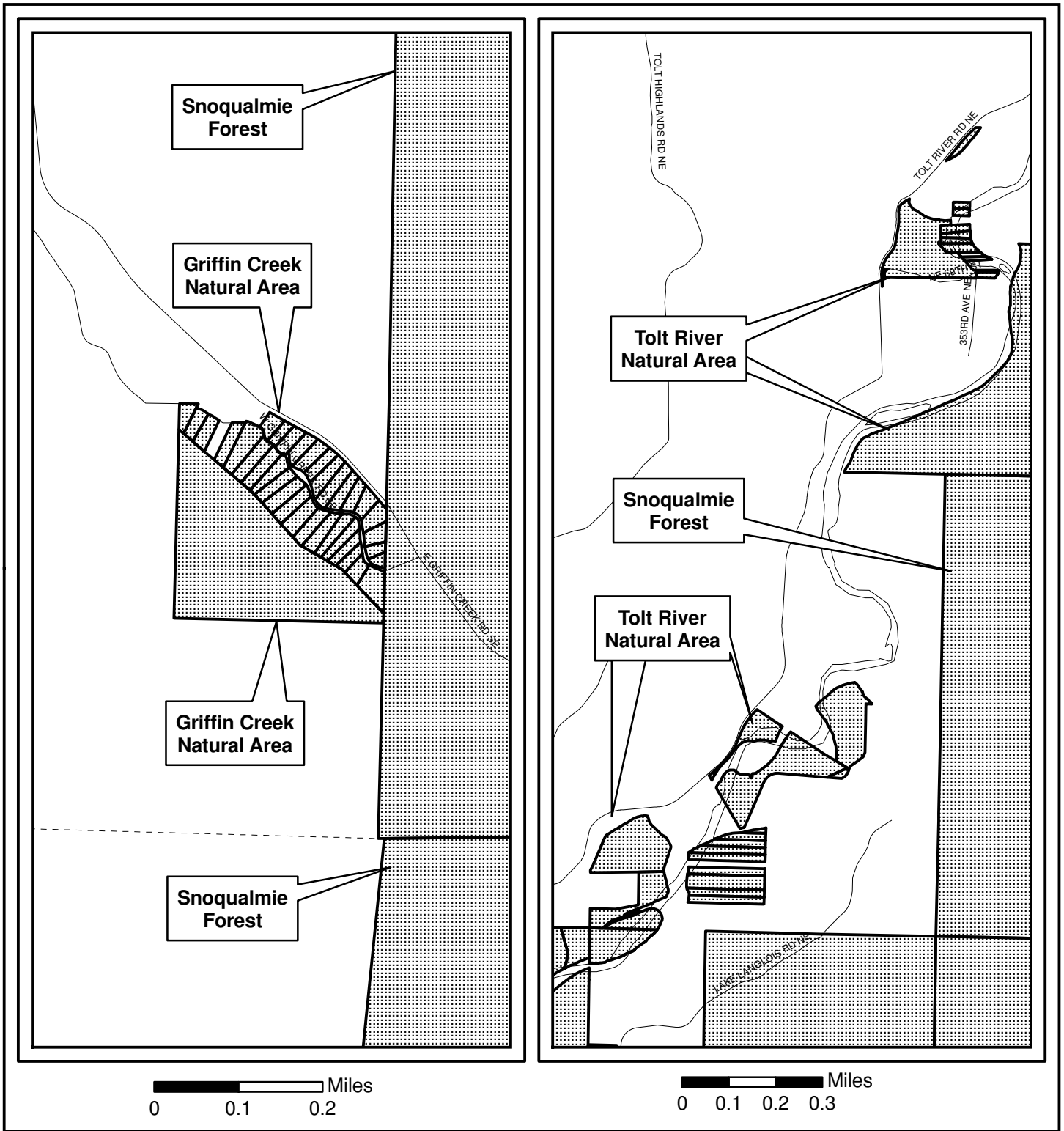


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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



# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 6A - T25-R7 Zoom



June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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



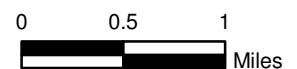
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 7 - T25-R8

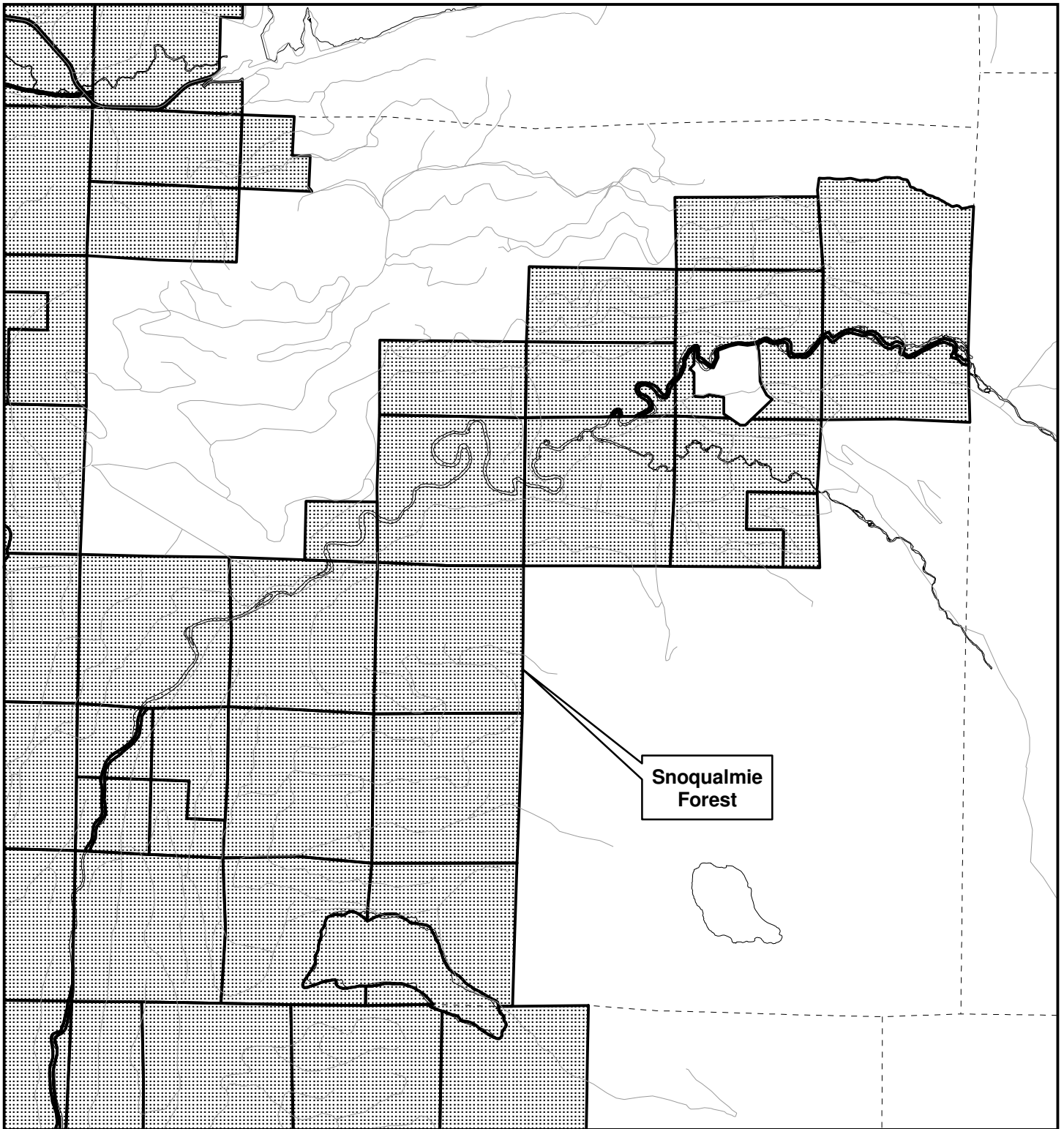


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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


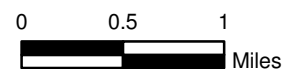
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 8 - T25-R9



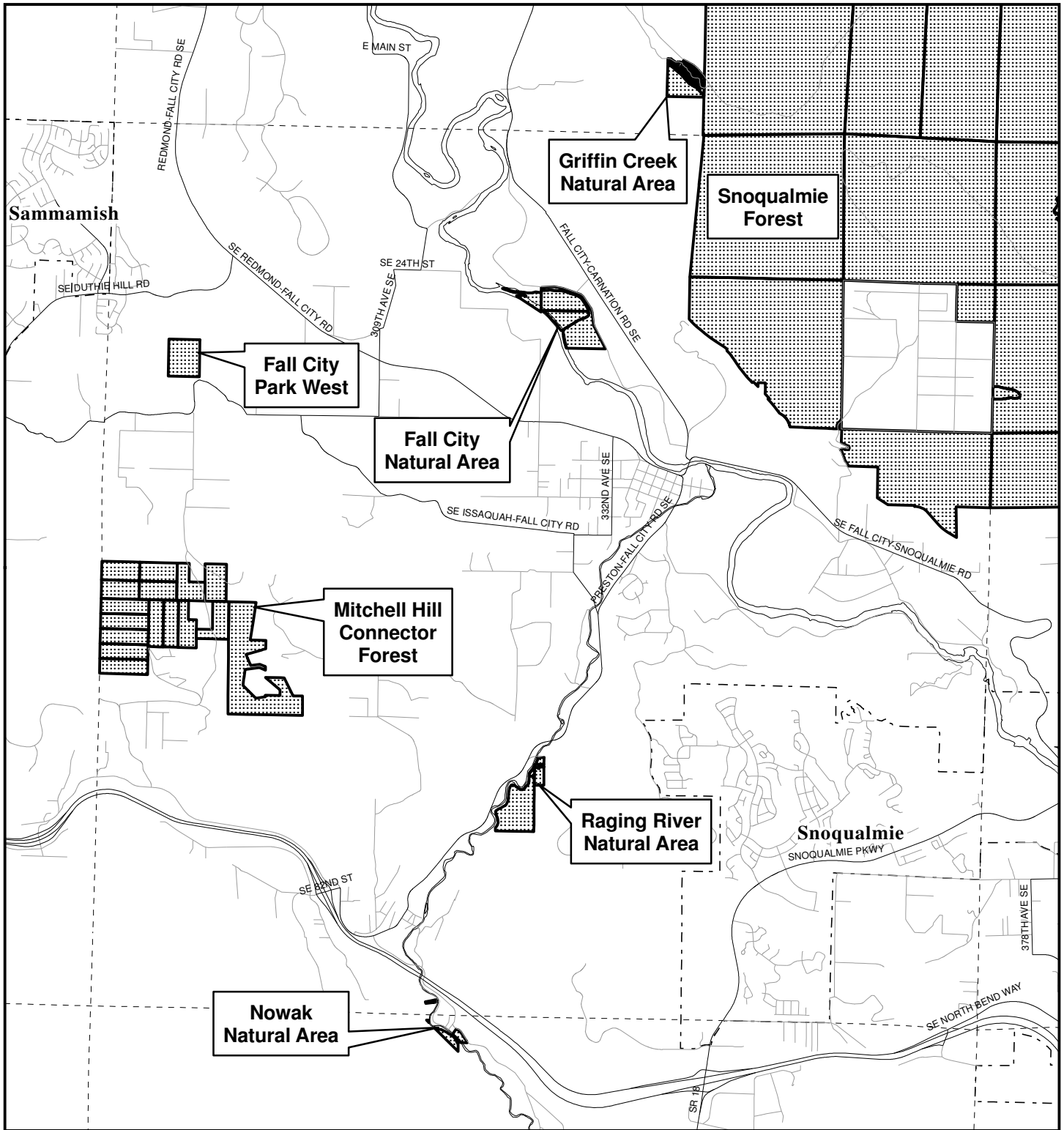
June 30, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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


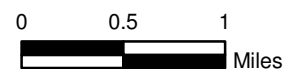
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 9 - T24-R7

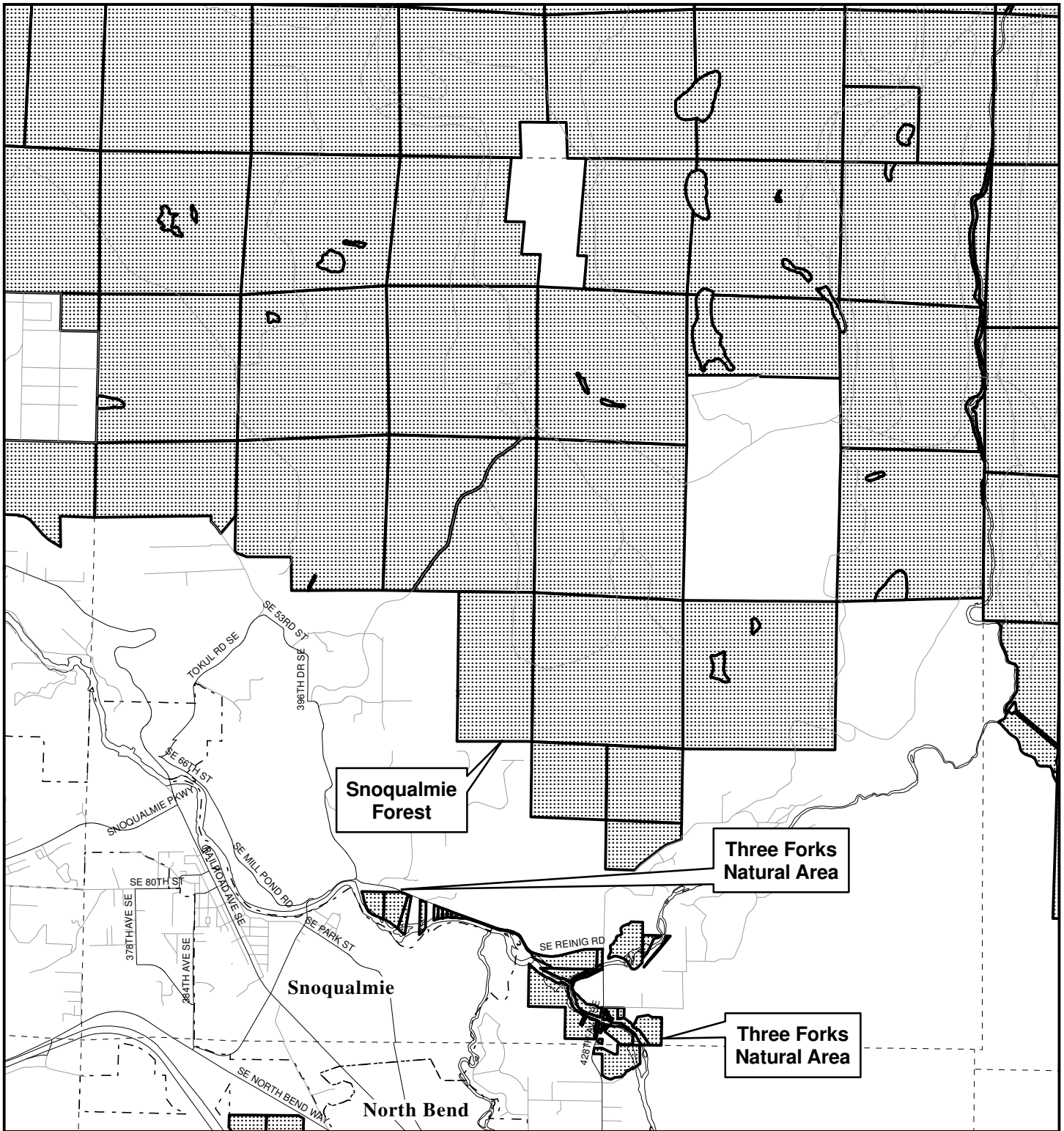


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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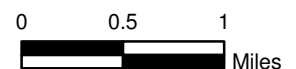
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 10 - T24-R8

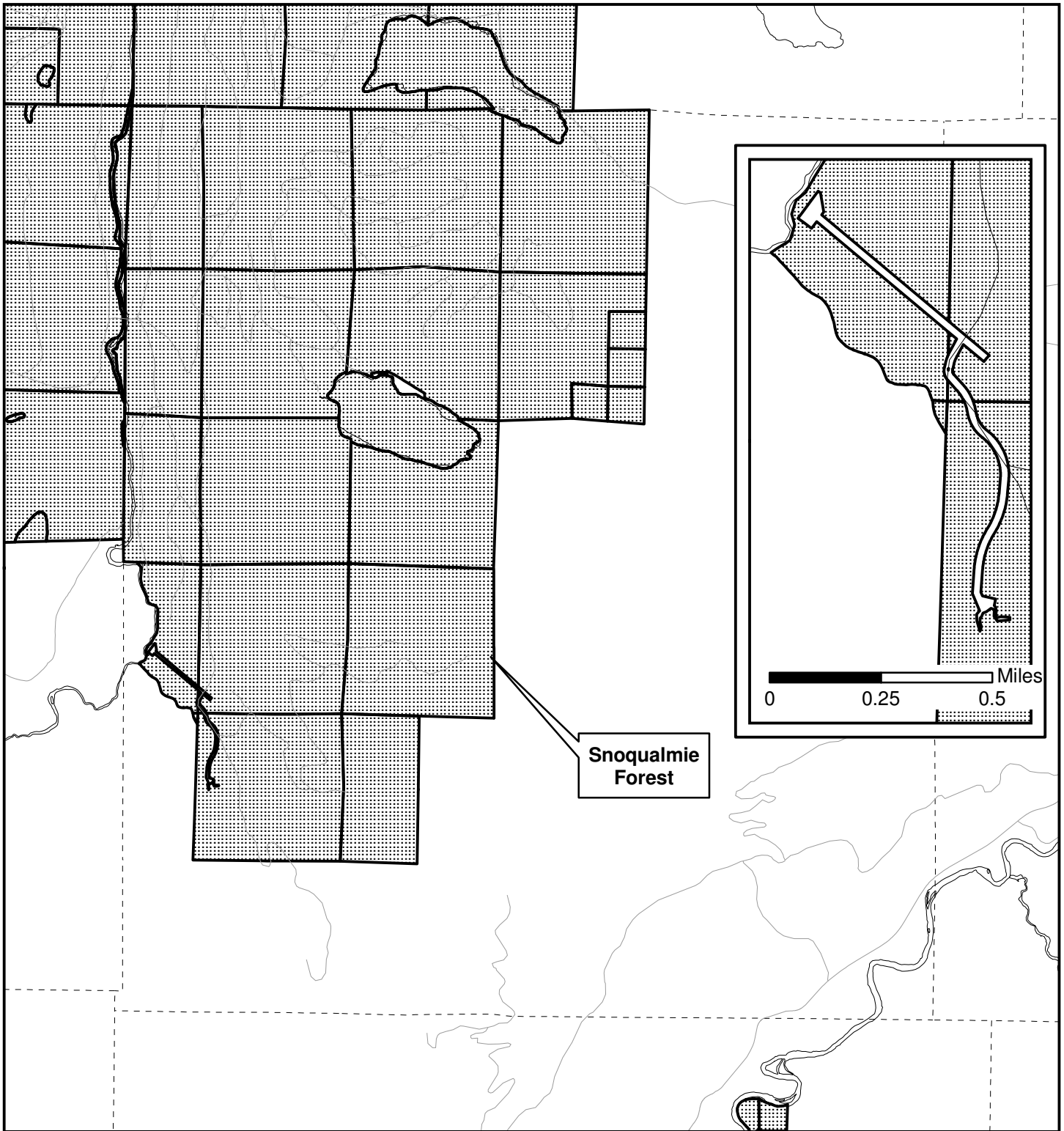


June 30, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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


# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 11 - T24-R9

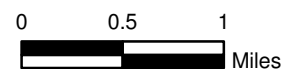


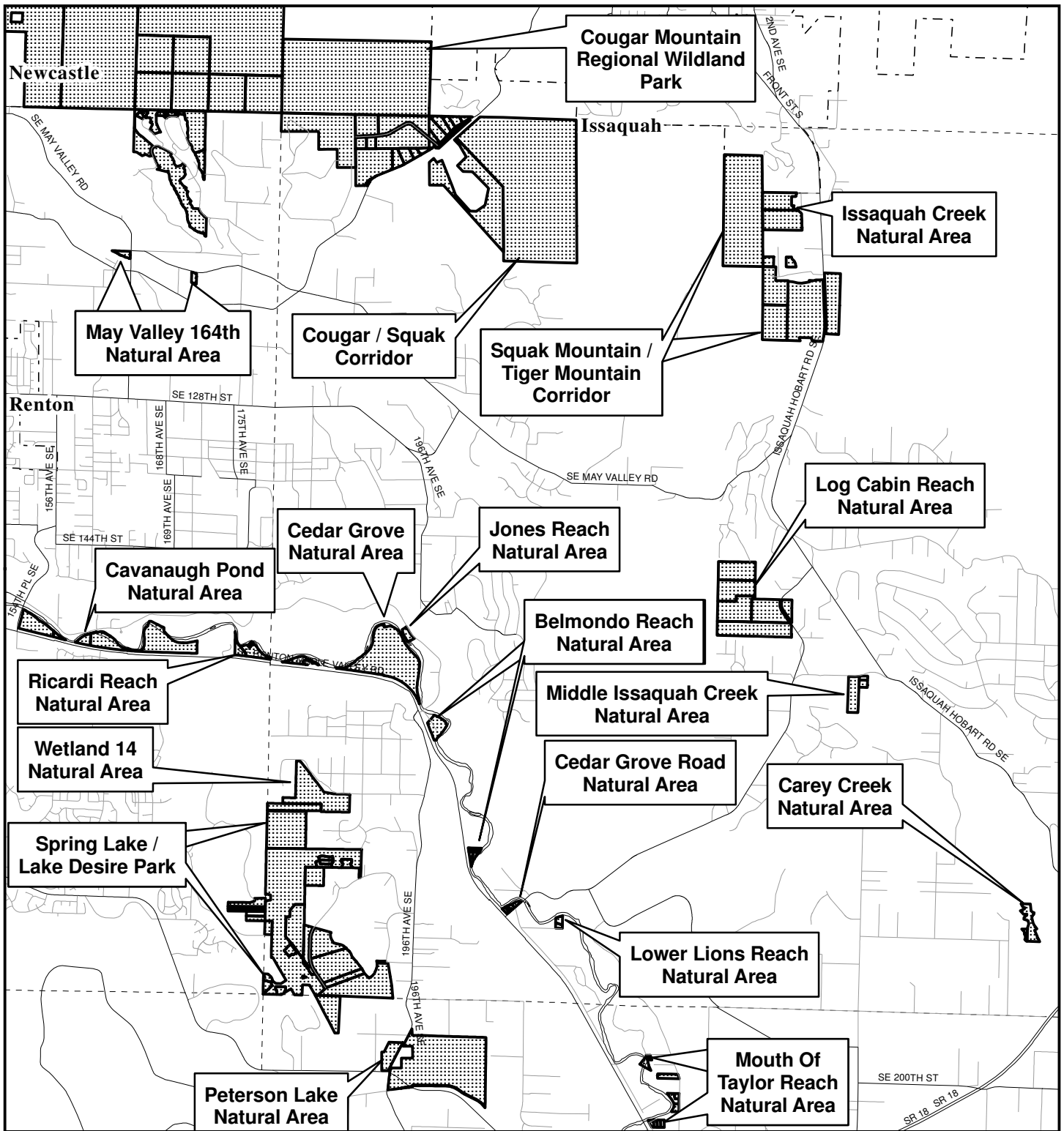
June 30, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines

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**COW Materials, Page 31**








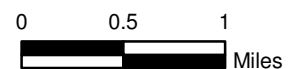
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 12 - T23-R6



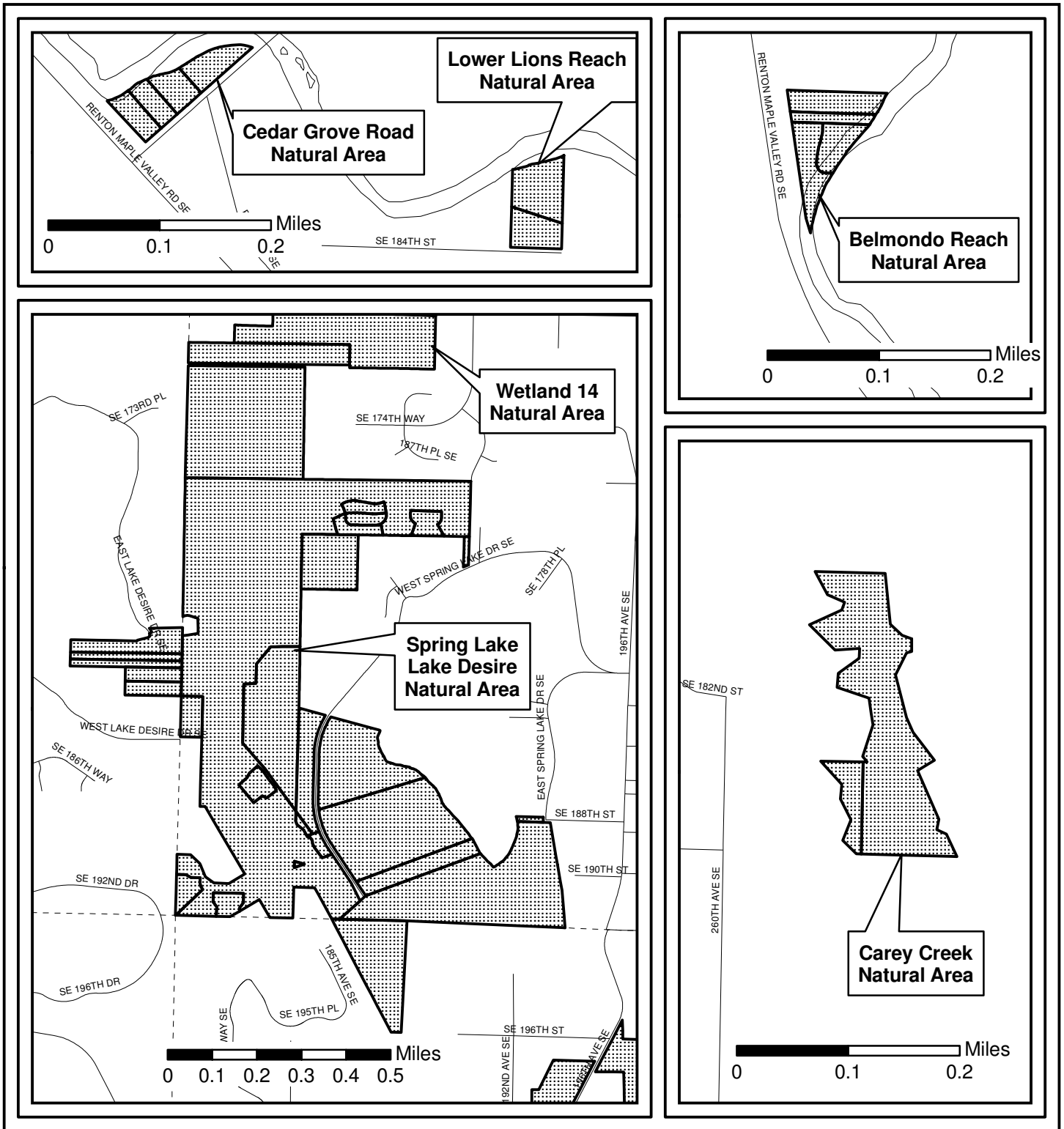
June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines






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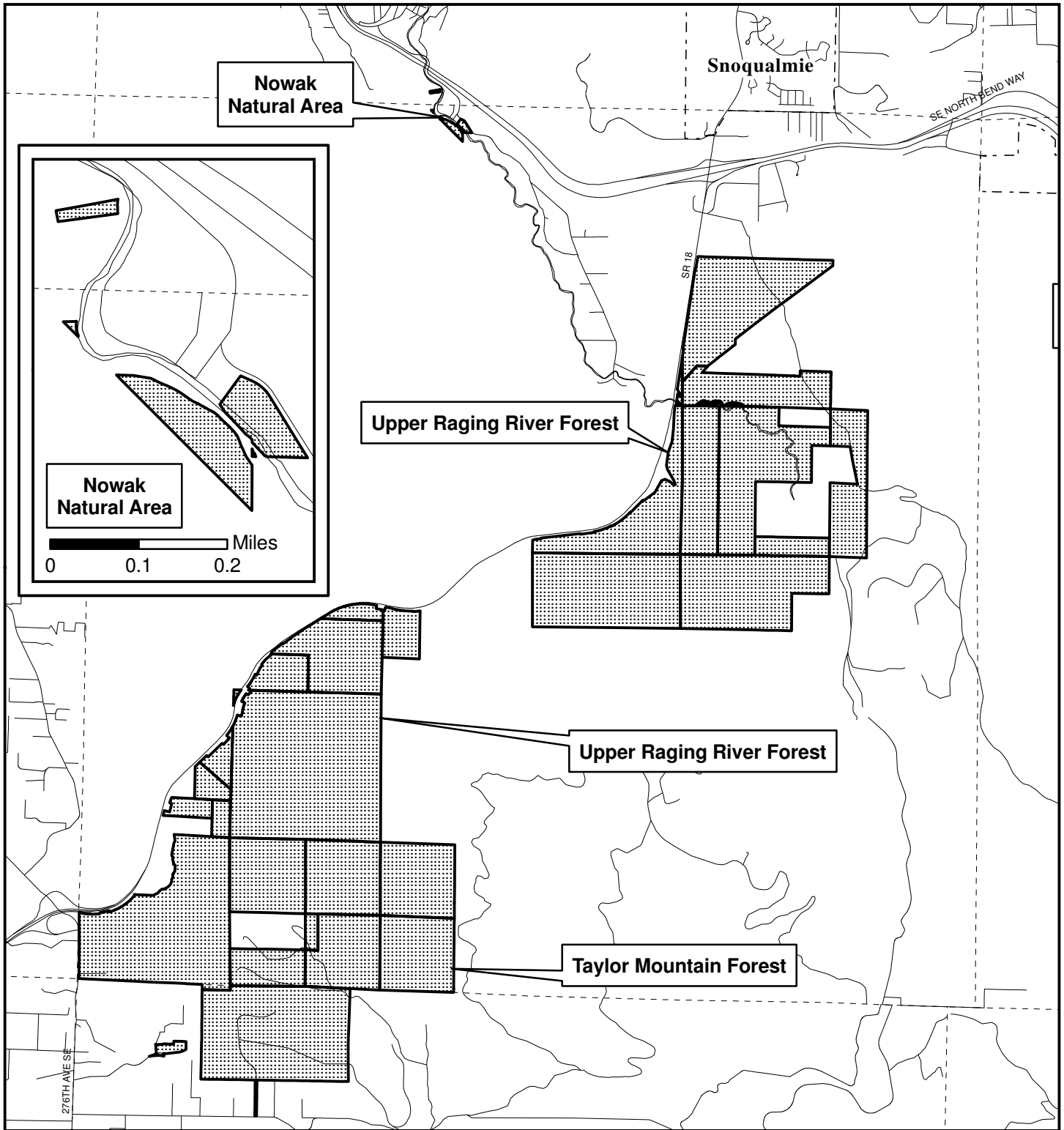
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 12A - T23-R6 Zoom

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines

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


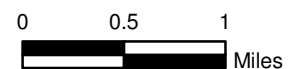
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 13 - T23-R7

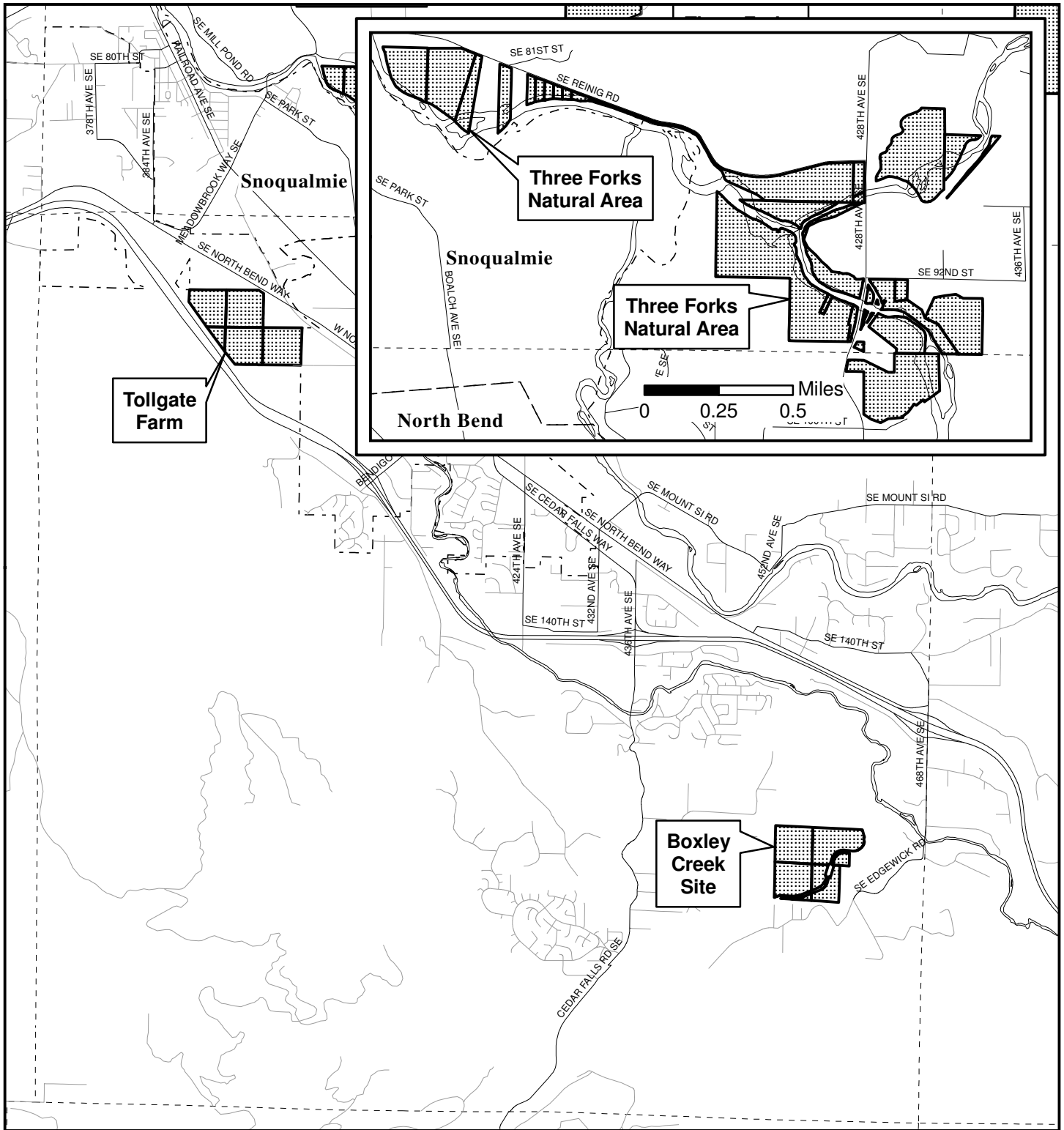


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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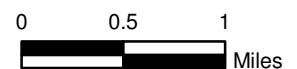
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 14 - T23-R8

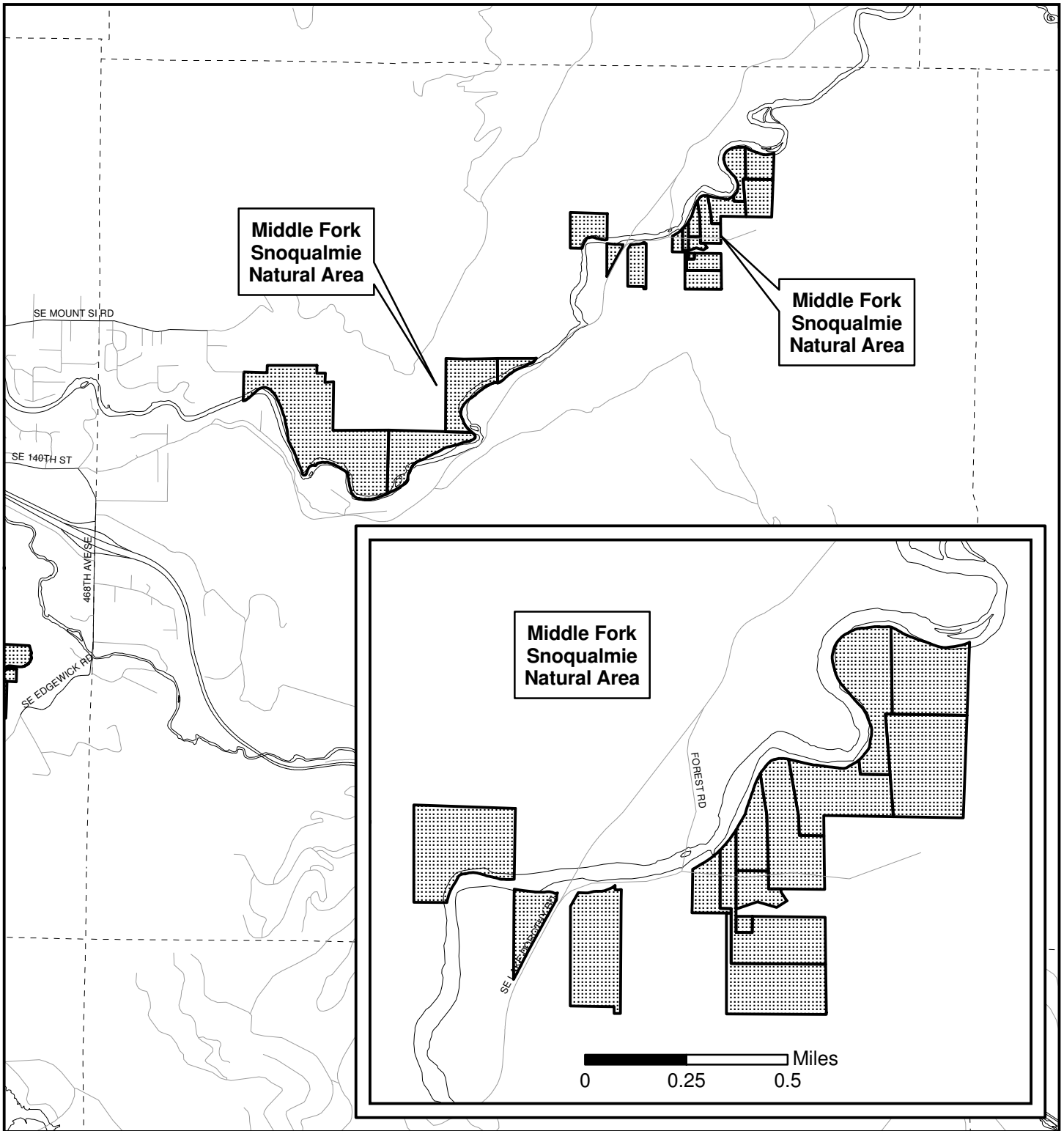


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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


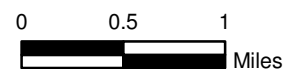
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 15 - T23-R9

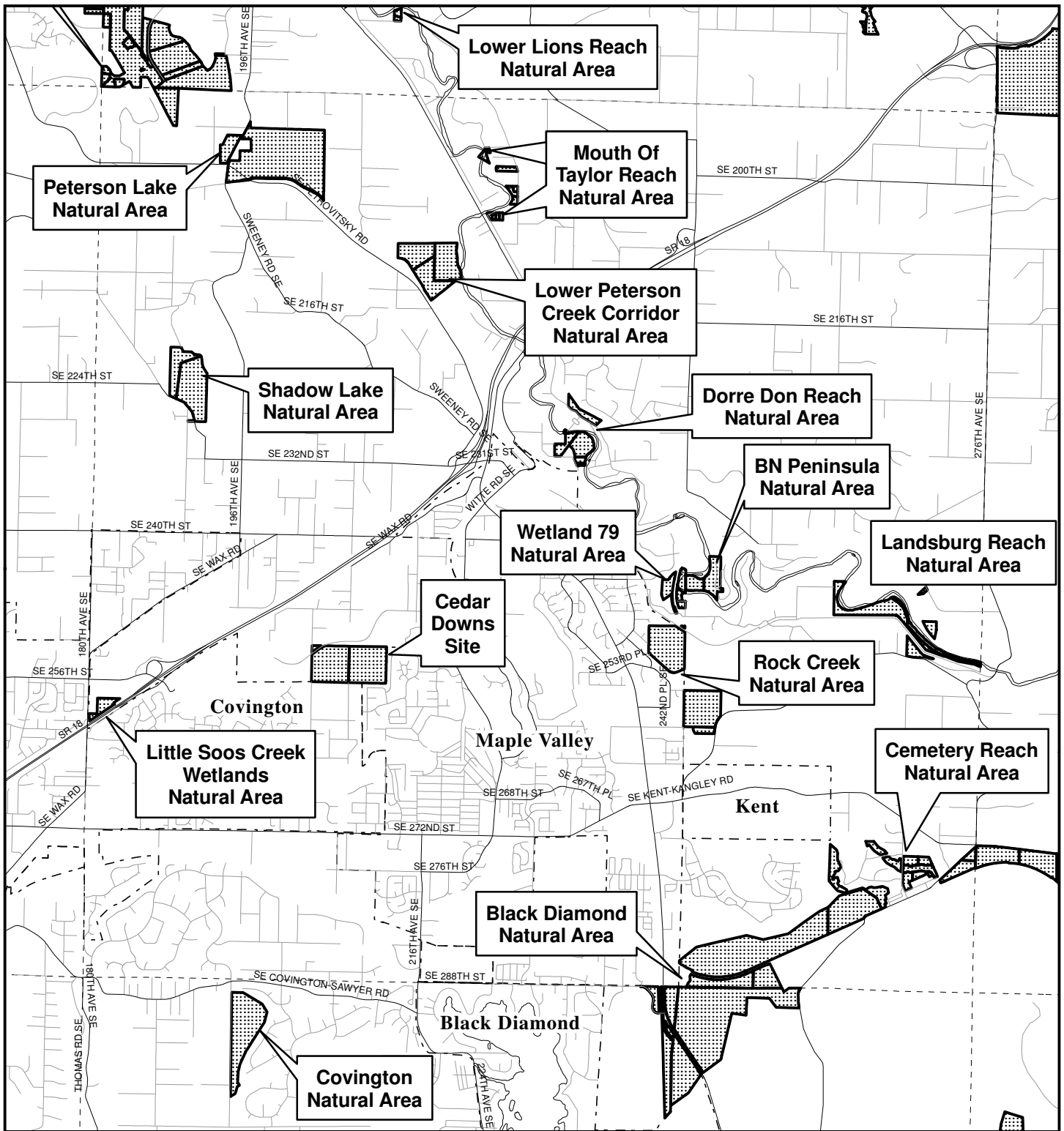


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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


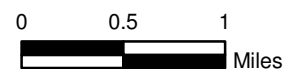
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 16 - T22-R6

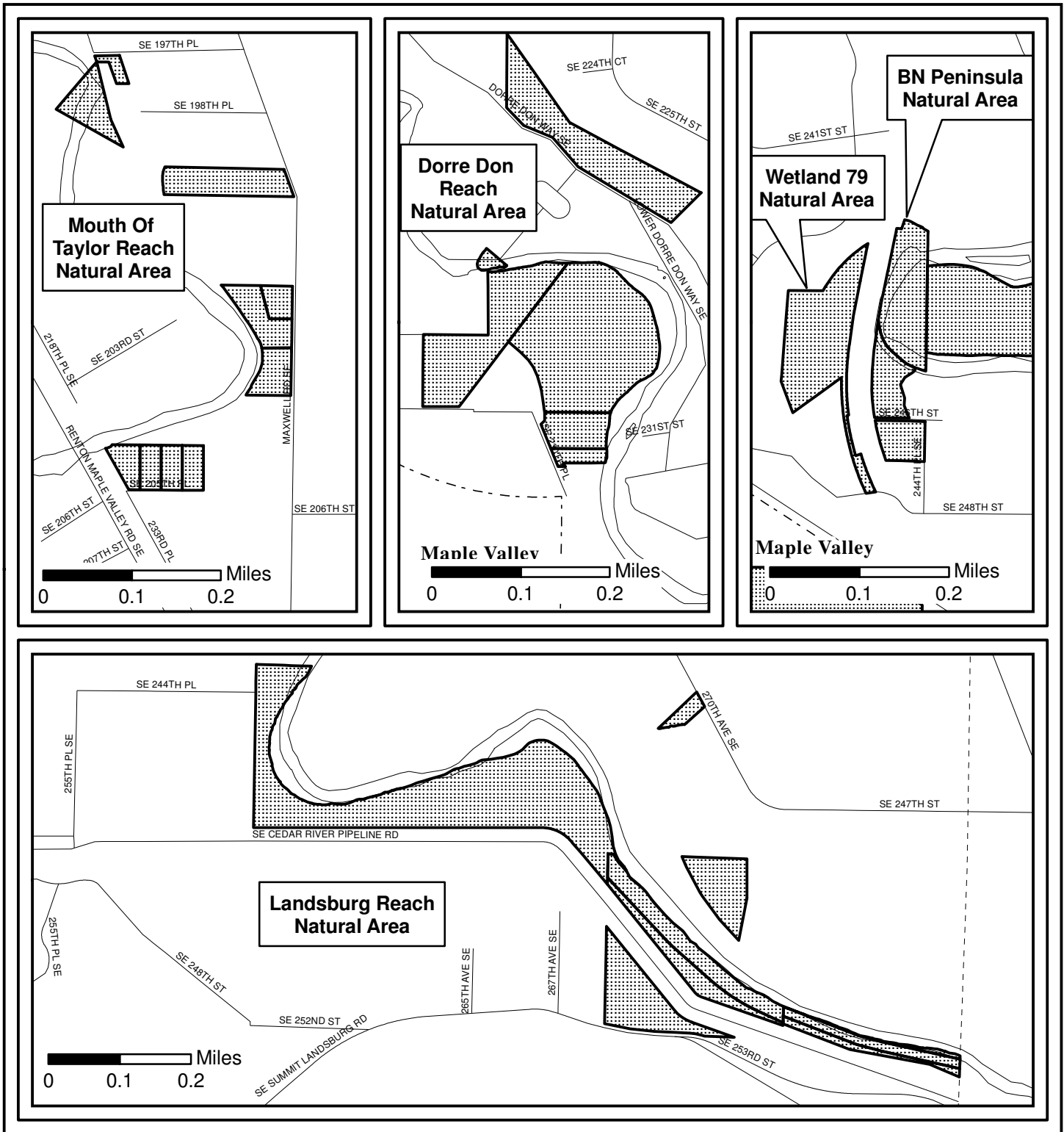


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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



# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 16A - T22-R6 Zoom

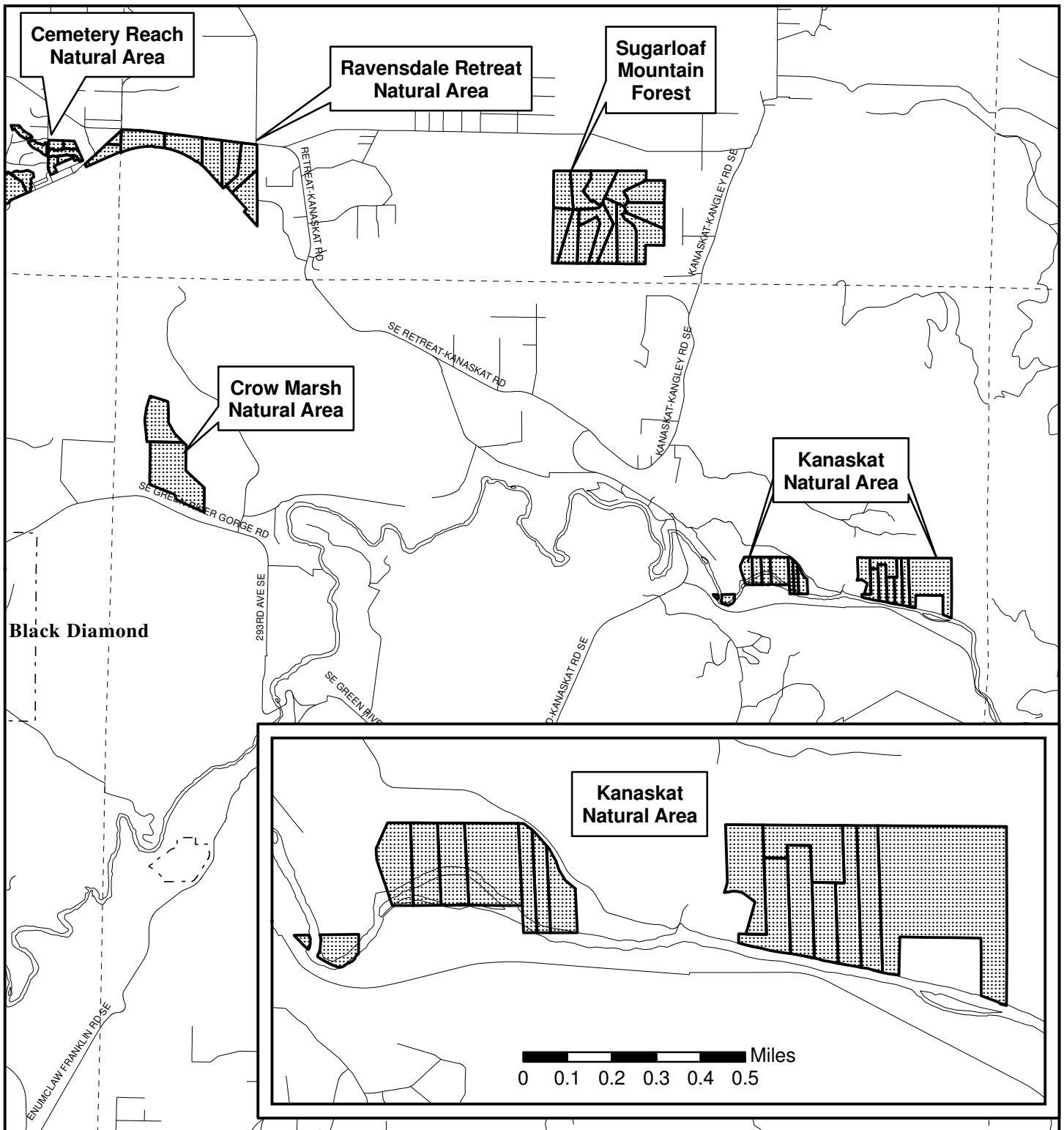


June 30, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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


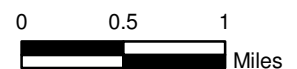
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 17 - T22-R7, T21-R7

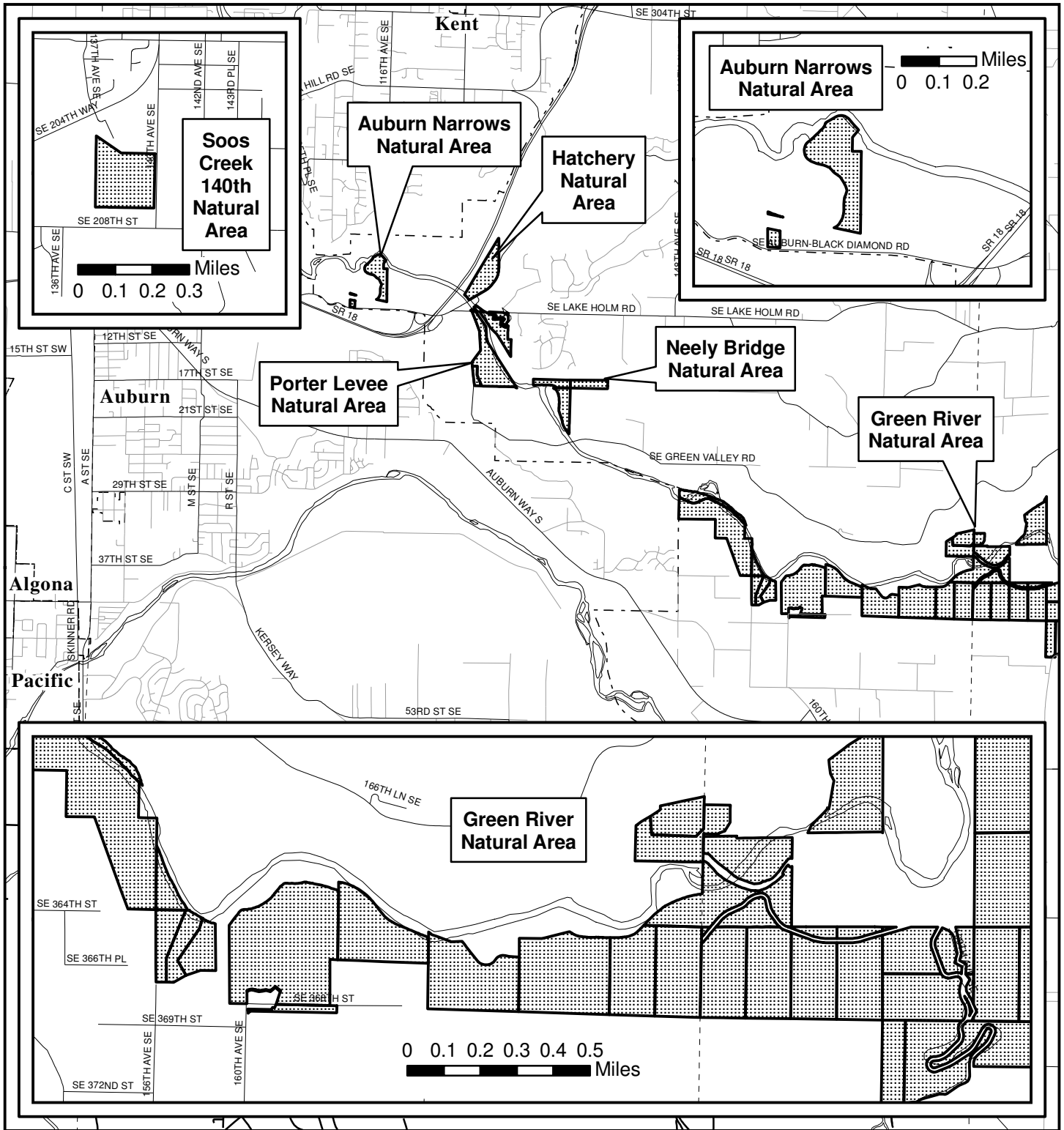


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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


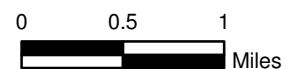
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 18 - T21-R5



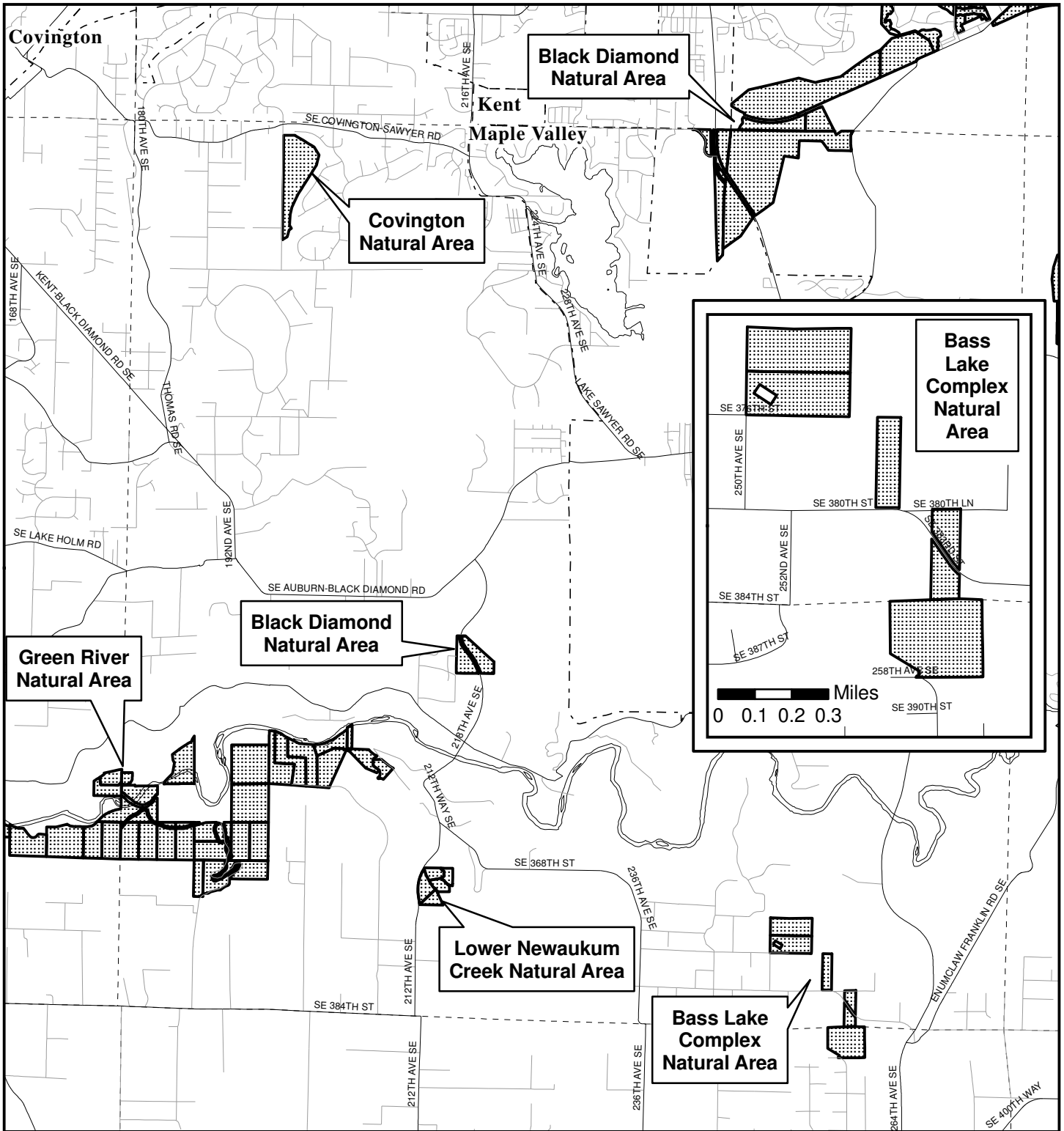
June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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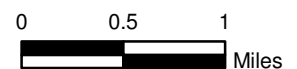
# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 19 - T21-R6

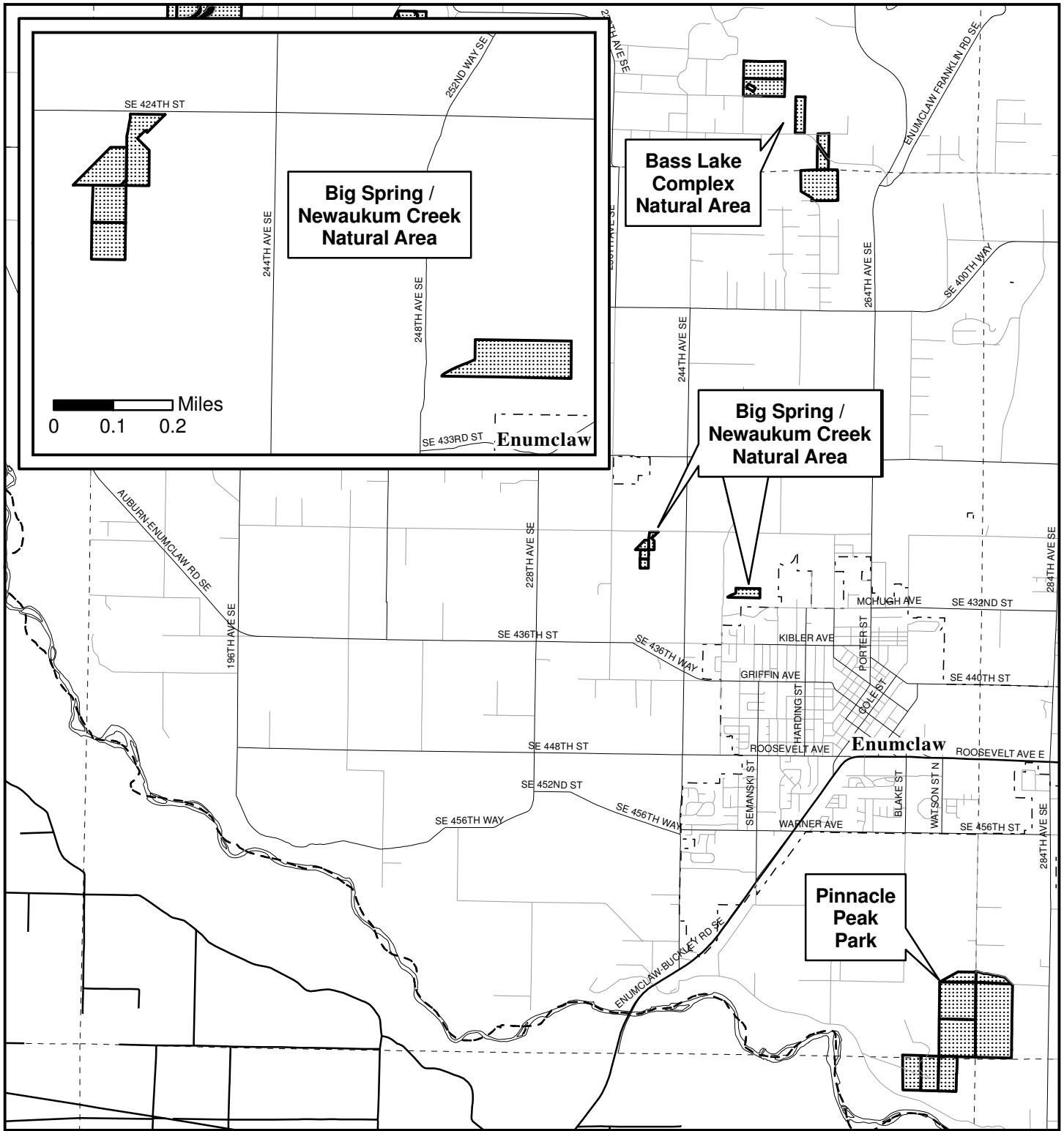


June 10, 2008

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines



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



# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

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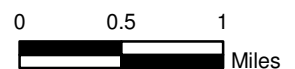
June 10, 2008

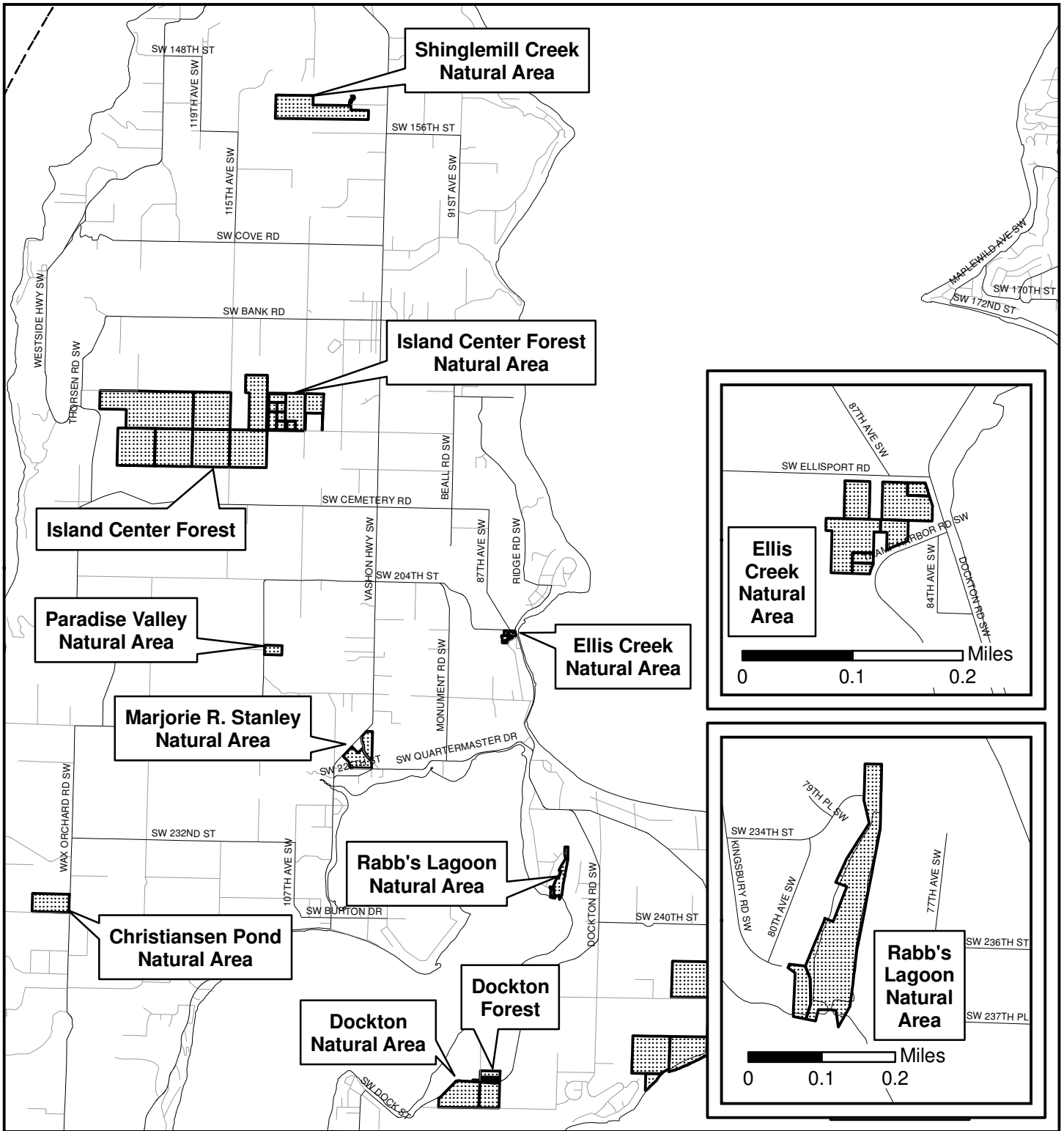
## Map 20 - T20-R6

-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines

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# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

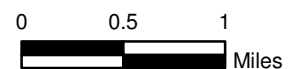
## Map 21 - Vashon North

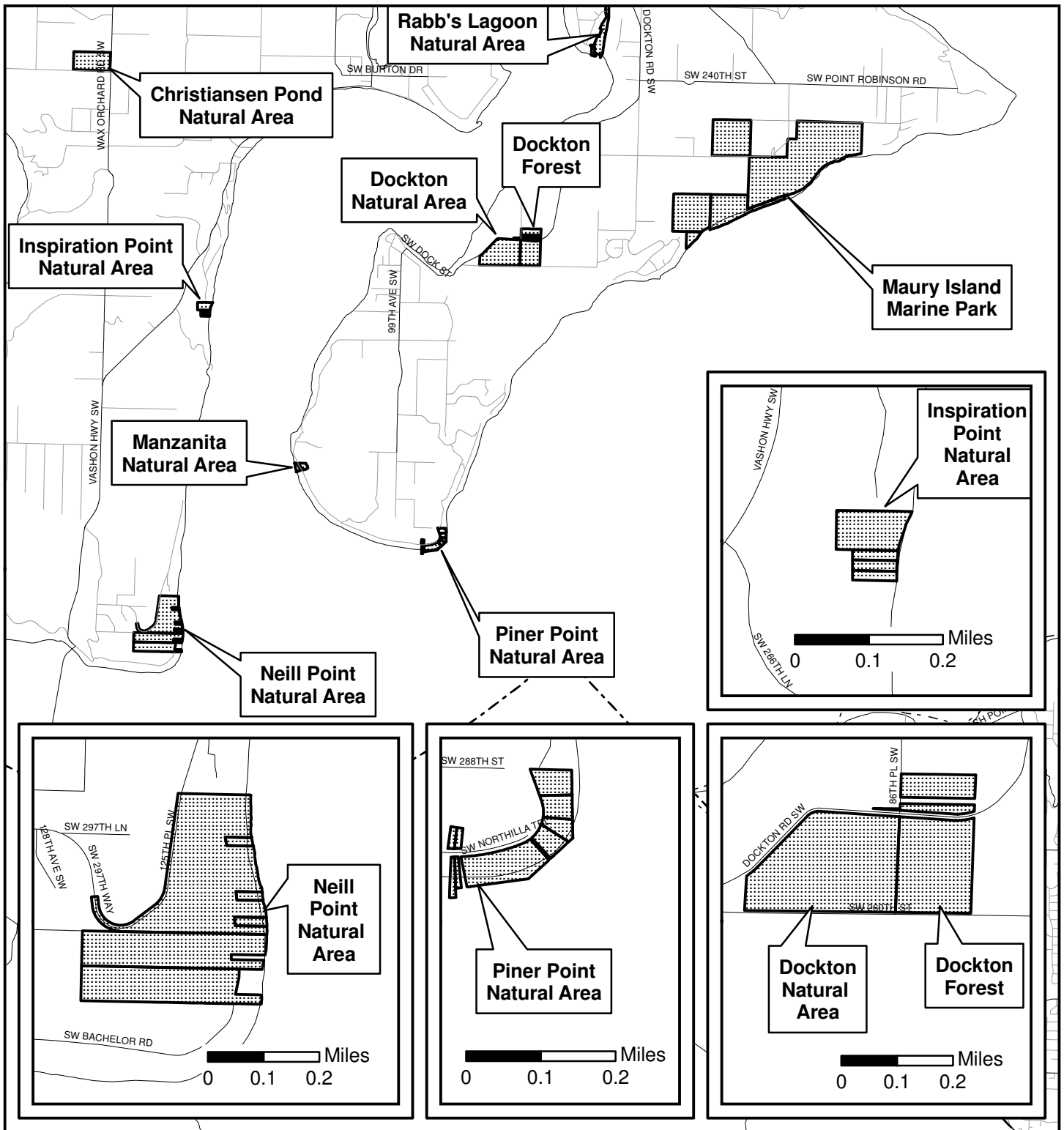
 High Conservation Value Properties

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June 10, 2008





# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 22 - Vashon South



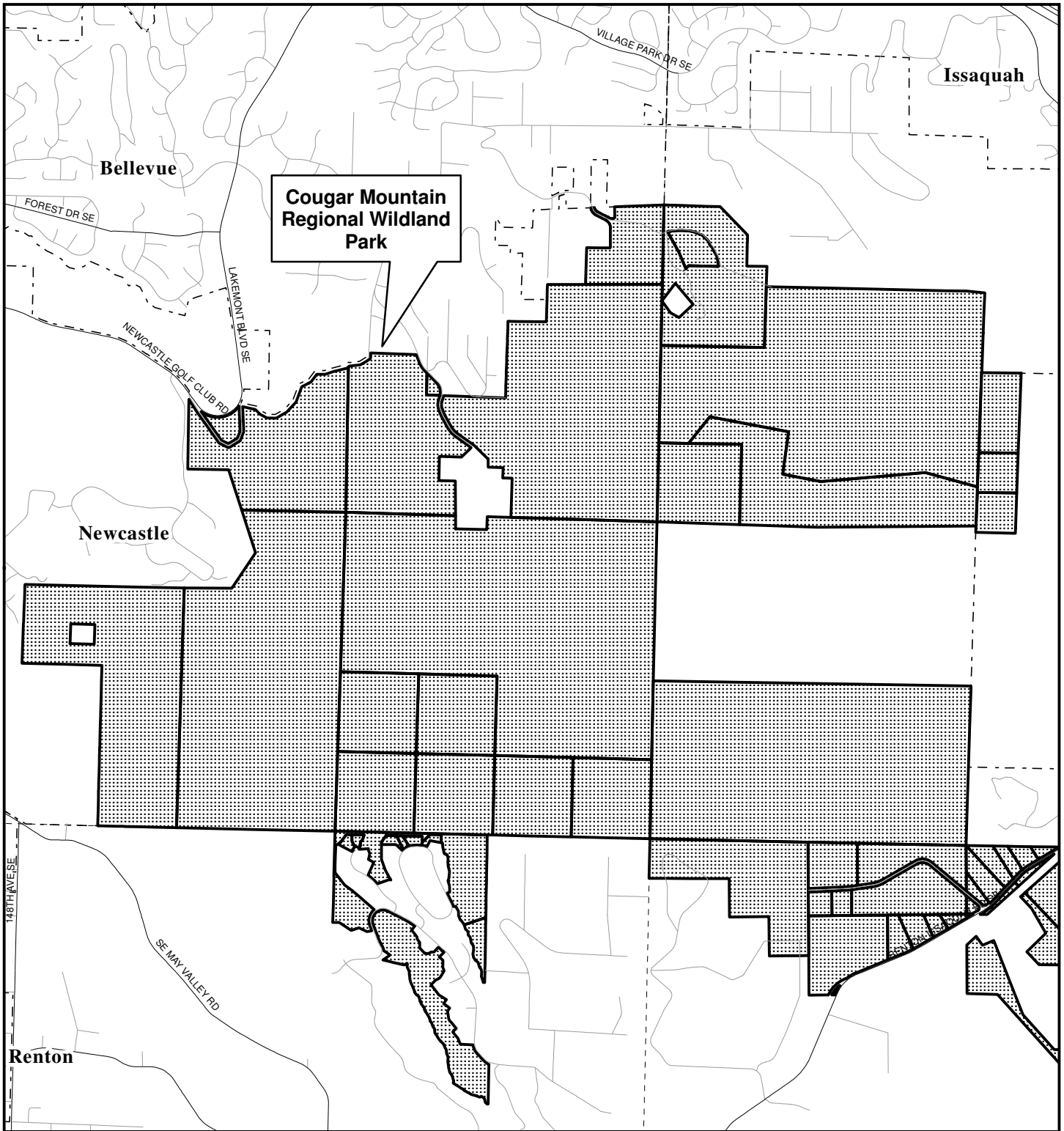
June 30, 2008

 High Conservation Value Properties






0 0.5 1  
Miles

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# Charter Appendix A: Inventory of High Conservation Value Properties

## Map 23 - Cougar Mountain

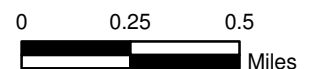
-  High Conservation Value Properties
-  Cities
-  Township Lines

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June 10, 2008



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*We the People*  
*Article 1*

2007-2008 King County  
Charter Review Commission

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Final Report and Recommendations



*Recognizing Forty Years of  
Good Governance*

King County, Washington

May 2008  
COW Materials, Page 47

Specific to the Sheriff's concerns, the Commission encourages the Council to consider the recommendations in the Blue Ribbon Panel report and its subsequent Progress Report. The Commission agrees that there is a need to improve the current system. The remedies suggested by the Commission are different from those put forward by the Blue Ribbon Panel, partly due to the different charges of the Commission (broad) and the Blue Ribbon Panel (focused). The Commission believes that the recommendations of both bodies can be used by the Council to create a more functional and responsive County government.

**Minority Report Summary (6 signatories):** The collective bargaining amendment for elected officials is a compromise that places in the County Charter a matter that should be governed by "good faith" conduct of the elected officials of King County. The appropriate place to prescribe management rules of conduct between elected officials and the branches of County government is the King County Code, not the Charter. This amendment is a step back for King County governance to a pre-charter time when the county and its leadership were fragmented. See page 39 for the full minority report.

Final vote: | Yes – 12 | No – 5 | Abstain – 0 | Absent – 4 |

### **Elections Deadlines**

*Charter Section – Sections 230.40, 230.50, and 800*

*Subcommittee – Governmental Structure*

*Amendment Language – See page 31*

The Commission recommends an amendment to change the deadlines for placing initiatives, referenda, and proposed charter amendments on the ballot from 45 days before the election to a deadline to be specified by county ordinance. The Elections Division brought it to the Commission's attention that the current deadline does not provide sufficient time for the production of election materials, especially ballots and voter pamphlets.

The proposed amendment would allow the Council to specify a deadline that appropriately reflects the time necessary to process such ballot measures in a timely way (state law currently provides 84 days). This revised deadline would allow more time to prepare and mail election materials such as notices, ballots, and voters' pamphlets, without affecting the amount of time allowed for citizens to gather signatures on initiatives or for the Council to consider ballot initiative language.

Final vote: | Yes – 19 | No – 0 | Abstain – 0 | Absent – 2 |

### **Open Space Protection**

*Charter Section – New Section 897*

*Subcommittee – Rural/Local Issues*

*Amendment Language – See page 31*

The Commission recommends providing additional, charter-based protection to certain open space properties in which King County holds an interest (either owns or owns the development rights to). The Open Space Amendment (OSA) would create a list of high conservation value county properties as an appendix to the Charter. These lands would be permanently protected from sale, transfer, or conversion to a different use than was authorized at the time of their acquisition. There would be no change in how residents currently use these spaces.



The Executive, in conjunction with the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, originally developed the amendment. The Rural/Local subcommittee took up this proposal, studied it, and amended it. The amendment has the following features:

- Adds additional protection to the most ecologically valuable and irreplaceable open space lands owned by King County.
- Creates a charter list of high value, natural open space properties. A charter amendment would be required to add or remove properties from this list, as confirmed by a majority vote of the people (see page 53 for the list of properties).
- Prevents the county from transferring or selling these high value open space lands without a majority vote of the people, except in certain specified circumstances.

A majority vote of the people would be required to remove this protection from a charter property. The lands protected by the OSA would remain natural, open spaces unless an exception must be made for the public good, such as a utility project or in the event of a natural disaster. No new land is required to be purchased under this amendment. King County already owns the OSA-protected land, or the development rights to the land. No direct costs are associated with OSA.

The specific properties protected by the OSA were chosen for their high value in safeguarding the county's drinking water, habitat, recreation opportunities, and rural economy:

- Clean drinking water – protects the water quality of rivers, lakes, streams, and aquifers that county residents rely upon for their drinking water.
- High-quality habitat – provides some of the best habitat in the county for native vegetation and wildlife, including salmon, which are threatened by urbanization.
- Recreation – provides open spaces for recreation opportunities such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.
- Rural economy – commercial timber production maintains a vibrant rural economy, as well as large open spaces important for recreation, wildlife habitat, and water quality. Much of the acreage protected by the OSA is commercial timberland.

**Minority report summary (3 signatories):** The Open Space Amendment seeks to use the King County Charter as the vehicle for regulating the use of specific parcels of real estate. This dangerous step undermines the proper role of the charter. King County should resist attempts to use the charter review process for agendas unrelated to the structure of county government. The better public policy is to regulate the use of properties through duly enacted ordinances. See page 39 for the full minority report.

Final vote: | Yes – 17 | No – 2 | Abstain – 0 | Absent – 2 |

### **Qualifications**

*Charter Section – Sections 340.50 and 630*

*Subcommittee – Governmental Structure*

*Amendment Language – See page 32*

The Commission recommends a charter amendment that would allow the Council to establish by ordinance additional qualifications for separately elected officials who head charter-based departments. Currently, Section 630 identifies general qualifications for

ed, to the county council a written report recommending those amendments, if any, which should be made to the charter. Appointees shall be subject to confirmation by a majority of the county council. This citizen commission shall be composed of at least one representative from each of the county council districts. The county council shall consider the commission's report and recommendations and decide at an open public meeting how to proceed on each of the commission's recommended charter amendments.

### **Elected Officials and Collective Bargaining**

#### *Section 890 Employee Representation.*

The county council (~~(may)~~) shall enact an ordinance providing for collective bargaining by the county with county employees covered by the personnel system. If an ordinance providing for collective bargaining is enacted, it shall not be subject to the veto power of the county executive; and it shall designate the county executive as the bargaining agent of the county. Any such ordinance shall provide for the effective participation in bargaining by those separately elected officials who head departments that are subject to this charter. Language controlling working conditions (including work rules, shift schedules, discipline and termination) in any collective bargaining agreement covering employees of such a separately elected county official must be consented to by that official prior to the bargaining agent agreeing to such language, proposing its inclusion in a bargaining agreement or sending the bargaining agreement to the county council for ratification. If the executive and separately elected official are unable to resolve a conflict that arises regarding such language, they shall report this in writing to the council, which shall provide guidance on how to proceed in further negotiations concerning the matter in conflict. Any agreement reached as a result of negotiations by the county bargaining agent with county employees shall not have the force of law unless enacted by ordinance.

### **Elections Deadlines**

#### *230.40 Referendum*

... After the petitions are filed, the ordinance to be referred shall be placed on the ballot at the next special or general election occurring more than forty-five days after the petitions are filed after the minimum time established by ordinance for presentation of referendum measures to the county officer responsible for conducting elections, provided that in the case of an ordinance effective only in unincorporated areas of the county, the proposed ordinance shall be voted upon only by the registered voters residing in unincorporated areas of the county. ...

#### *230.50 Initiative*

... If the proposed ordinance is not enacted within ninety days after the petitions are ~~presented~~ filed, it shall be placed on the ballot at the next ~~regular~~ general or special election occurring after the minimum time established by ordinance for presentation of initiative measures to the county officer responsible for conducting elections, occurring more than one hundred thirty-five days after the petitions are filed or at an earlier election designated by the county council. ...

#### *800 Charter Review Commission*

... The county council may propose amendments to this charter by enacting an ordinance to submit a proposed amendment to the voters of the county at the next general election occurring more than forty-five days after the enactment of the ordinance occurring after the minimum time established by ordinance for presentation of proposed charter amendments to the county officer responsible for conducting elections. ...

### **Open Space Protection**

#### *New Section 897. High Conservation Value Properties.*

The clerk of the council shall maintain the list of inventoried high conservation value properties set forth as Appendix A to this charter. The inventory may include only properties in which the county owns a fee simple interest or a lesser interest. No inventoried county property interest shall ever be conveyed, relinquished, or converted to a different use than was authorized at the time of acquisition, as evidenced by deed, easement, covenant, contract or funding source requirements, except that this section shall not prevent: the conveyance of an inventoried property interest to another government, the conveyance of an inventoried property interest under the lawful threat or exercise of eminent domain; the grant of an easement, license, franchise or use agreement for utilities or other activities compatible with use restrictions in place at the time of acquisition; or the use of an inventoried property interest for habitat restoration, flood control, low-impact public amenities or regionally significant public facilities developed for purposes related to the conservation values of the property, road or utility projects, or emergency projects necessary to protect public health, welfare or safety. This section shall not affect any contractual obligations entered into as part of the county's acquisition of an inventoried property interest.

See page 53 for the proposed inventory of high conservation value properties, Appendix A to the Charter.

## Appendix G: Open Space Amendment Inventory (Charter Appendix A)

The following is a summary of the Open Space Amendment property list adopted by the Commission, and does not include specific parcel and recording numbers for each property. These numbers would be a part of Charter Appendix A if the Open Space Amendment is adopted. The full property list is available on the Commission's website at <http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/charter/issues/openspace>.

PROPERTY NAME	ACRES (Fee)	ACRES (Easement)
Ames Lake Forest	0	425
Auburn Narrows Natural Area - portion	16	0
Bass Lake Complex Natural Area	93	0
Belmondo Reach Natural Area	12	0
Big Spring/Newaukum Creek Natural Area - portion	0	17
Black Diamond Natural Area - portion	427	0
BN Peninsula Natural Area	27	0
Boxley Creek Site	147	0
Carey Creek Natural Area	0	10
Carnation Marsh Natural Area	68	12
Cavanaugh Pond Natural Area	57	0
Cedar Downs Site	78	0
Cedar Grove Natural Area	75	0
Cedar Grove Road Natural Area	3	0
Cemetery Reach Natural Area	46	0
Chinook Bend Natural Area	71	3
Christiansen Pond Natural Area	0	19
Cold Creek Natural Area	130	0
Cougar Mountain Regional Park - portion	2688	0
Cougar/Squak Corridor	431	0
Covington Natural Area	56	0
Crow Marsh Natural Area - portion	0	100
Dockton Forest	19	0
Dockton Natural Area	26	0
Dorre Don Reach Natural Area - portion	29	0
Ellis Creek Natural Area	3	0
Evans Creek Natural Area	38	0
Evans Crest Natural Area	30	0
Fall City Natural Area	49	29
Fall City Park West	33	0
Girl Scouts Totem Council	0	367
Green River Natural Area - portion	757	0
Griffin Creek Natural Area	62	0
Hatchery Natural Area	24	0
Hazel Wolf Wetland Natural Area	0	116
Inspiration Point Natural Area	6	0

PROPERTY NAME	ACRES (Fee)	ACRES (Easement)
Island Center Forest	288	0
Island Center Forest Natural Area	81	0
Issaquah Creek Natural Area - portion	38	0
Jones Reach Natural Area	3	0
Kanaskat Natural Area	170	0
Kathryn C. Lewis Natural Area	10	0
Landsburg Reach Natural Area	50	0
Little Soos Creek Wetlands Natural Area	7	0
Log Cabin Reach Natural Area	118	0
Lower Bear Creek Natural Area	11	0
Lower Lions Reach Natural Area	2	0
Lower Newaukum Creek Natural Area	30	0
Lower Peterson Creek Corridor Natural Area	67	0
Manzanita Natural Area	2	0
Marjorie R. Stanley Natural Area	18	0
Maury Island Marine Park - portion	270	0
May Valley 164th Natural Area	4	0
Middle Bear Creek Natural Area	66	25
Middle Evans Creek Natural Area	0	38
Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area	644	0
Middle Issaquah Creek Natural Area	14	0
Mitchell Hill Connector Forest	426	0
Moss Lake Natural Area - portion	318	0
Mouth Of Taylor Reach Natural Area	12	0
Neely Bridge Natural Area	28	0
Neill Point Natural Area	52	0
Nowak Natural Area	8	0
Paradise Lake Natural Area	123	31
Paradise Valley Natural Area	5	0
Patterson Creek Natural Area	205	0
Patterson Creek Preserve Forest	0	243
Peterson Lake Natural Area	145	0
Piner Point Natural Area	7	0
Pinnacle Peak Park - portion	228	0
Porter Levee Natural Area	56	0
Raab's Lagoon Natural Area	10	0
Raging River Natural Area	51	0
Ravenhill Open Space	26	0
Ravensdale Retreat Natural Area	138	0
Ricardi Reach Natural Area	10	0
Ring Hill Forest	321	0
Rock Creek Natural Area - portion	86	0
Shadow Lake Natural Area	0	59
Shinglemill Creek Natural Area	0	46

PROPERTY NAME	ACRES (Fee)	ACRES (Easement)
Snoqualmie Forest	0	90476
Soos Creek 140th Open Space	16	0
Spring Lake/Lake Desire Park	386	0
Squak Mt/Tiger Mt Corridor	266	0
Stillwater Natural Area	45	101
Sugarloaf Mountain Forest	284	0
Taylor Mountain Forest	1845	0
Three Forks Natural Area	267	0
Tollgate Farm - portion	161	0
Tolt River Natural Area	264	0
Uplands Forest	0	353
Upper Bear Creek Conservation Area	22	16
Upper Raging River Forest	0	2724
Wetland 14 Natural Area	41	0
Wetland 79 Natural Area	7	0
<b>Total acres (108,460)</b>	<b>13,249</b>	<b>95,211</b>

## APPENDIX B: Minority Reports

### Minority Report – Elected Officials and Collective Bargaining

The Charter Commission has been faced with a barrage of issues proposed by the King County Sheriff, including the collective bargaining amendments that passed with a divided vote. The clear impact of all of the proposals would have been to create a new, separate executive branch of government in King County, the Sheriff's Office. The best solution for all of the issues and the collective bargaining issue would have been no amendments. The voted compromise language approved by the Charter Commission is placing a matter in the County Charter that should be dealt with by "good faith" management relationships. If there is any proper place to write rules of good conduct for King County elected department heads, it is the County Code – not the Charter.

This amendment will further divide the working relationships of the County executive branch. It is the beginning of a move to isolate the Sheriff and perhaps other elected officials from working with the King County Executive. Structurally, it is moving the County backwards to the old days of County government before the County adopted its home rule Charter in 1968. It will not improve accountability or authority within the County.

If further amendments to the Charter are granted to separate the Sheriff or other elected officials from effective working relationships with the County Executive, the patterns of past abuse that arose in a fragmented County and precipitated the 1968 Charter reform will repeat themselves. The greatest opportunity for abuse of public office is in the exercise of police powers and in the management of the police officers serving the County. Effective oversight by the County Council and Charter requirements that elected department directors work together with the County Executive are the best preventative measures to avoid future problems.

Signed,

Kirstin Haugen  
Gary P. Long  
Gov. Mike Lowry  
Sharon Maeda  
Lois North  
Mike Wilkins

### Minority Report – Open Space Protection

The Open Space Amendment seeks to use the King County Charter as the vehicle for regulating the use of specific parcels of real estate. This is a dangerous step that undermines the proper role of the charter.

Under the Washington Constitution, when a county frames a "home rule" charter, it is establishing a government. Wash. Const. art. 11, sec. 4. When adopted, the charter becomes the "organic law" that creates the body politic and establishes the structure and function of county government. *Id.*, see also *Ford v. Logan*, 79 Wash.2d 147, 155 (1971). Unfortunately, the recommendation to utilize the charter as a regulatory tool is a step away from this role and opens the door for charter amendments based on agendas or the politics of the day, rather than defining the structure of county government.

King County should resist attempts to use the charter review process for agendas unrelated to the structure of county government. The better public policy is to regulate the use of properties through duly enacted ordinances.

Signed,

Jim English  
John Groen  
Sarah Rindlaub

## 2007-2008 CHARTER ISSUE SUMMARY

### Open Space Amendment

**Issue subject:** Should the Charter provide additional protection for certain open space lands owned by King County?

**Issue raised by:** The Executive and DNRP worked together to develop this concept, then conveyed it to the Commission for its consideration. The Rural/Local Subcommittee took up the amendment, and analyzed and modified it.

**Description of issue:** The Amendment provides additional protection for over 100,000 acres of open space land owned by the county, in perpetuity. These lands were chosen for additional protection due to their irreplaceable environmental, landscape, biodiversity, and/or commercial forestry values. The Amendment will protect these lands for future generations of residents, unless an exception must be made for the public good, or the citizens vote to remove a property from Charter protection.

The Amendment strengthens protections against a property being sold or relinquished by the County, and strengthens the protection of a property's natural, open space character, so that these lands will not be lost to the pressures of development.

#### **Suggested charter revision:**

New Section 897. High Conservation Value Properties.

The clerk of the council shall maintain the list of inventoried high conservation value properties set forth as Appendix A to this charter. The inventory may include only properties in which the county owns a fee simple interest or a lesser interest. No inventoried county property interest shall ever be conveyed, relinquished, or converted to a different use than was authorized at the time of acquisition, as evidenced by deed, easement, covenant, contract or funding source requirements, except that this section shall not prevent: the conveyance of an inventoried property interest to another government, the conveyance of an inventoried property interest under the lawful threat or exercise of eminent domain; the grant of an easement, license, franchise or use agreement for utilities or other activities compatible with use restrictions in place at the time of acquisition; or the use of an inventoried property interest for habitat restoration, flood control, low-impact public amenities or regionally significant public facilities developed for purposes related to the conservation values of the property, road or utility projects, or emergency projects necessary to protect public health, welfare or safety. This section shall not affect any contractual obligations entered into as part of the county's acquisition of an inventoried property interest.

**Recommendations:**

The Subcommittee voted to adopt the Charter language as above, 5-2. The full Commission voted to adopt the amendment, 17-2.

**Summary of arguments for and against:**

Pros: The Amendment would add additional protection to valuable open space lands that will be increasingly pressured by urban development. It is a no-cost method that gives the citizens permanent control over some of their most significant open spaces.

Cons: Committee members have argued that the proposal to include a list of specific parcels within the Charter raises a significant policy issue with respect to the proper role of the King County Charter. John Groen stated that “It would not be prudent to utilize the charter as a vehicle to implement specific choices as to the use of particular parcels. The decisions as to what parcels should be included on an inventory list are properly the subject of ordinances.”



**Summary List of High Conservation Value Properties - sorted alphabetically**  
Charter Open Space Amendment

(The inventory was created from King County DNRP Parks & TDR property inventory as of 12/31/2008)

<b>1. INCLUDED IN CHARTER AMENDMENT INVENTORY</b>				
<b>Site Name</b>	<b>Land Category</b>	<b>Council District</b>	<b>Acres (Fee)</b>	<b>Acres (Easement)</b>
Ames Lake Forest	Resource	3	0	425
Auburn Narrows Natural Area - portion	Ecological	7	16	0
Bass Lake Complex Natural Area	Ecological	9	164	0
Belmondo Reach Natural Area	Ecological	9	13	0
Big Spring/Newaukum Creek Natural Area - portion	Ecological	9	0	17
Black Diamond Natural Area - portion	Ecological	7 & 9	427	0
BN Peninsula Natural Area	Ecological	9	27	0
Boxley Creek Site	Multi-Use	3	147	0
Carey Creek Natural Area	Ecological	9	0	10
Carnation Marsh Natural Area	Ecological	3	68	12
Cavanaugh Pond Natural Area	Ecological	9	57	0
Cedar Downs Site	Multi-Use	9	78	0
Cedar Grove Natural Area	Ecological	9	75	0
Cedar Grove Road Natural Area	Ecological	9	3	0
Cemetery Reach Natural Area	Ecological	9	46	0
Chinook Bend Natural Area	Ecological	3	71	0
Christiansen Pond Natural Area	Ecological	8	0	19
Cold Creek Natural Area	Ecological	3	130	0
Cougar Mountain Regional Park - portion	Multi-Use	3 & 9	2688	0
Cougar/Squak Corridor	Multi-Use	3 & 9	431	0
Covington Natural Area	Ecological	7	56	0
Crow Marsh Natural Area - portion	Ecological	9	0	100
Dockton Forest	Resource	8	19	0
Dockton Natural Area	Ecological	8	44	0
Dorre Don Reach Natural Area - portion	Ecological	9	29	0
Ellis Creek Natural Area	Ecological	8	3	0
Evans Creek Natural Area	Ecological	3	38	0
Evans Crest Natural Area	Ecological	3	30	0
Fall City Natural Area	Ecological	3	49	29
Fall City Park West	Multi-Use	3	33	0
Girl Scouts Totem Council	TDR	3	0	367
Green River Natural Area - portion	Ecological	7	757	0
Griffin Creek Natural Area	Ecological	3	62	0
Hatchery Natural Area	Ecological	7	24	0
Hazel Wolf Wetland Natural Area	Ecological	3	0	116
Inspiration Point Natural Area	Ecological	8	8	7
Island Center Forest	Resource	8	288	0
Island Center Forest Natural Area	Ecological	8	81	0
Issaquah Creek Natural Area - portion	Ecological	3 & 9	38	0
Jones Reach Natural Area	Ecological	9	3	0
Kanaskat Natural Area	Ecological	9	170	0
Kathryn C. Lewis Natural Area	Ecological	3	10	0
Landsburg Reach Natural Area	Ecological	9	50	0
Little Soos Creek Wetlands Natural Area	Ecological	9	7	0
Log Cabin Reach Natural Area	Ecological	9	118	0
Lower Bear Creek Natural Area	Ecological	3	11	0
Lower Lions Reach Natural Area	Ecological	9	2	0
Lower Newaukum Creek Natural Area	Ecological	9	30	0
Lower Peterson Creek Corridor Natural Area	Ecological	9	67	0
Manzanita Natural Area	Ecological	8	2	0
Marjorie R. Stanley Natural Area	Ecological	8	18	0

**Summary List of High Conservation Value Properties - sorted alphabetically**  
 Charter Open Space Amendment

Maury Island Marine Park - portion	Multi-Use	8	270	0
May Valley 164th Natural Area	Ecological	9	4	0
Middle Bear Creek Natural Area	Ecological	3	66	25
Middle Evans Creek Natural Area	Ecological	3	0	38
Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area	Ecological	3	644	0
Middle Issaquah Creek Natural Area	Ecological	9	32	0
Mitchell Hill Connector Forest	Resource	3	426	0
Moss Lake Natural Area - portion	Ecological	3	318	0
Mouth Of Taylor Reach Natural Area	Ecological	9	12	0
Neely Bridge Natural Area	Ecological	7	28	0
Neill Point Natural Area	Ecological	8	53	0
Nowak Natural Area	Ecological	3 & 9	8	0
Paradise Lake Natural Area	Ecological	3	123	31
Paradise Valley Natural Area	Ecological	8	5	0
Patterson Creek Natural Area	Ecological	3	205	0
Peterson Lake Natural Area	Ecological	9	145	0
Piner Point Natural Area	Ecological	8	8	0
Pinnacle Peak Park - portion	Multi-Use	9	228	0
Point Heyer Natural Area	Ecological	8	7	0
Porter Levee Natural Area	Ecological	7	56	0
Raab's Lagoon Natural Area	Ecological	8	11	0
Raging River Natural Area	Ecological	3	51	0
Ravenhill Open Space	Multi-Use	3	26	0
Ravensdale Retreat Natural Area	Ecological	9	138	0
Ricardi Reach Natural Area	Ecological	9	10	0
Ring Hill Forest	Resource	3	321	0
Rock Creek Natural Area - portion	Ecological	9	86	0
Shadow Lake Natural Area	Ecological	9	0	59
Shinglemill Creek Natural Area	Ecological	8	0	46
Snoqualmie Forest	Resource	3	0	90476
Soos Creek 140th Open Space	Multi-Use	9	16	0
Spring Lake/Lake Desire Park	Multi-Use	9	386	0
Squak Mt/Tiger Mt Corridor	Multi-Use	3 & 9	266	0
Stillwater Natural Area	Ecological	3	45	101
Sugarloaf Mountain Forest	Resource	9	284	0
Taylor Mountain Forest	Resource	9	1845	0
Three Forks Natural Area	Multi-Use	3	267	0
Tollgate Farm - portion	Multi-Use	3	161	0
Tolt River Natural Area	Ecological	3	264	0
Upper Bear Creek Conservation Area	Ecological	3	22	16
Upper Green River Watershed Forest	Resource	9	0	45040
Upper Raging River Forest	Resource	3 & 9	0	2724
Wetland 14 Natural Area	Ecological	9	41	0
Wetland 79 Natural Area	Ecological	9	7	0
<b>Total Acreage <u>Included</u></b>			<b>Fee</b>	<b>Easement</b>
			<b>13,370</b>	<b>139,660</b>

**Summary List of High Conservation Value Properties - sorted alphabetically**  
Charter Open Space Amendment

**2 EXCLUDED FROM CURRENT CHARTER AMENDMENT INVENTORY**

Sites may be excluded from the list for one or more of the following reasons. The fact that a site would not be on the initial inventory list does not mean that it will not receive this level protection in the future after further study.

*Limited ownership/management rights:* Sites owned by other agencies and/or King County manages by agreement only.

*Transfer/surplus:* Identified as potential transfers to other agencies or potential surplus. Many of such sites are located within the UGA

*Recreation funding or component:* Acquired and/or funded all or in part with active recreation funding and/or intent. Have existing or proposed significant active recreation-oriented or other types of development, including regional trail corridors.

*All Farmland Preservation Program sites:* The development rights and the properties that were acquired using FPP bond (Ordinance 4341) funds are already permanently protected under the terms of Ordinance 4341 which requires a public vote to remove from FPP.

*Further review required:* Many sites require further review before being included on an inventory, usually due to one or more of the above reasons.

Site Name	Land Category	Council District	Acres (Fee)	Acres (Easement)	Reason for Exclusion
132nd Square Park	Recreation	6	10	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
4A Development (Charles Jackson)	TDR	9	0	30	Already owned in fee as Soos Creek Park/Trail
Arbor Lake Park	Recreation	8	9	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Auburn Narrows Natural Area - portion	Ecological	7	89	0	These parcels are IAC active recreation, or in City of Auburn, or may be site of regional trail.
Bassett Pond Natural Area	Ecological	3	32	0	These parcels are IAC active recreation
Big Bend Natural Area	Ecological	9	101	0	May be added upon further confirmation of funding sources
Big Finn Hill Park	Multi-Use	6	219	0	UGA - site development includes athletic fields
Big Spring/Newaukum Creek Natural Area - portion	Ecological	9	77	0	Fee parcels may be added after transaction with Enumclaw concludes
Bingaman Pond Natural Area	Ecological	7	17	1	In UGA, pending annexation
Black Diamond Natural Area - portion	Ecological	7 & 9	186	546	78 fee acres (2 parcels) excluded as planned for regional trail route; 107 fee acres excluded because under negotiation for transfer to WA State Parks. If portions of 546 acres of term conservation easements convert to fee, they may be added in future.
Boulevard Lane Park	Multi-Use	5 & 9	30	0	UGA - site development includes athletic fields
Bridle Crest Trail Site	Recreation	3 & 6	2	1	All active recreation sites are excluded
Bryn Mawr Park	Recreation	5	5	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Burke Gilman Trail Site	Recreation	1	34	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Camelot Park	Multi-Use	7	18	0	UGA
Canyon Creek Natural Area	Multi-Use	3	0	27	Easement only
Cascade Park	Recreation	5	11	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Cecil Moses Memorial Park	Recreation	8	3	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Cedar River to Lake Sammamish Trail Site	Recreation	3 & 9	22	2	All active recreation sites are excluded
Cedar River Trail Site	Recreation	9	145	29	All active recreation sites are excluded
Chinook Bend Natural Area	Ecological	3	0	3	Easement excluded for now because it may be amended
Coalfield Park	Multi-Use	9	20	0	UGA/athletic fields
Costello	TDR	9	0	19	Private property, no public access; needs flexibility to comply with easement conditions
Cottage Lake Park	Recreation	3	21	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park - portion	Multi-Use	3 & 9	413	5	UGA, leased, developed, and mining portions of site
Cougar Mountain Wellsite 2	Recreation	9	1	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Crow Marsh Natural Area - portion	Ecological	9	21	0	Fee parcels may be added pending UGA shift in 2008 Comp Plan Amendment
Dahlgren	TDR	3	0	41	Already owned in fee as Tanner Landing Park
Dockton Forest Lease Site	Resource	8	0	0	King County DNRP only holds a lease on site
Dockton Park	Recreation	8	21	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Dorre Don Reach Natural Area - portion	Ecological	9	56	0	Fee parcels may be added pending UGA shift in 2008 Comp Plan Amendment
Duthie Hill Park	Multi-Use	3	120	0	Predominantly mountain bike facility
Duvall Park	Multi-Use	3	25	0	Potential transfer to City of Duvall under discussion
East Lake Sammamish Trail Site	Recreation	3	124	2	All active recreation sites are excluded
East Norway Hill Park	Recreation	1	26	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
East Plateau Trail Site	Recreation	3	27	2	All active recreation sites are excluded
Edith Moulton Park	Recreation	6	27	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Estebo Park	Recreation	3	1	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Evergreen Athletic Field	Recreation	8	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Evergreen Pool Site	Recreation	8	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Fall City Park	Multi-Use	3	28	0	Transfer to Snoq. Tribe
Five Mile Lake Park	Recreation	7	25	0	All active recreation sites are excluded

**Summary List of High Conservation Value Properties - sorted alphabetically**  
**Charter Open Space Amendment**

Flaming Geyser Natural Area	Ecological	9	73	0	These parcels are under negotiation for transfer to WA State Parks
Flaming Geyser Park	Multi-Use	9	104	0	Owned in fee, managed by others; designated for transfer to State Parks
Flick/Clark	TDR	3	0	21	Private property, no public access; needs flexibility to comply with easement conditions
Foothills/Enumclaw Plateau Trail Site	Recreation	9	65	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Fred V. Habenicht Rotary Park	Recreation	9	4	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Gold Creek Park	Recreation	3	35	2	All active recreation sites are excluded
Goldstar Properties	TDR	7	0	20	Already owned in fee as Green River Trail Site
Grand Ridge Park	Multi-Use	3	1288	0	Predominantly mountain bike facility
Green River Farm	Resource	7	26	0	Farmland Preservation Program covenants apply
Green River Natural Area - portion	Ecological	7	204	0	Portion of this one parcel is IAC active recreation
Green River to Cedar River Trail Site	Recreation	7 & 9	87	27	All active recreation sites are excluded
Green River Trail Site	Recreation	5, 7 & 8	22	6	All active recreation sites are excluded
Green Tree Park	Recreation	5	1	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Hamm Creek Natural Area	Ecological	8	4	0	In UGA, pending annexation
Hazel Valley Park	Recreation	8	3	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Hilltop Park	Recreation	8	7	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Honeydew Park	Multi-Use	9	0	0	UGA
Horsehead Bend Natural Area	Ecological	7	35	0	IAC active recreation
Horseneck Farm	Resource	7	37	0	Farmland Preservation Program covenants apply
Hyde Lake Park	Multi-Use	9	25	0	Potential transfer to state parks
Inglewood Wetlands	Ecological	1	15	0	In UGA/city, pending annexation
Issaquah Creek Natural Area - portion	Ecological	3 & 9	10	0	In UGA/city, pending annexation
Juanita Heights Park	Recreation	6	3	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Juanita Triangle Park	Multi-Use	6	0	0	UGA
Juanita Woodlands Park	Multi-Use	6	36	0	UGA
Kathryn Taylor/Trilogy Equestrian Park	Recreation	3	26	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Kentlake Athletic Fields	Recreation	7	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Kingsgate Park	Recreation	1	7	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Klahanie Park	Multi-Use	3	64	0	UGA
Klahanie Trail Site	Recreation	3	0	8	All active recreation sites are excluded
Kokta 1	TDR	3	0	20	Private property, no public access; needs flexibility to comply with easement conditions
Kokta 3	TDR	3	0	20	Private property, no public access; needs flexibility to comply with easement conditions
Lake Desire 2 Natural Area	Ecological	9	1	0	In UGA, pending annexation
Lake Francis Park	Recreation	9	10	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Lake Geneva Park	Recreation	7	19	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Lake Joy Park	Recreation	3	1	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Lake Youngs Connector Trail Site	Recreation	9	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Lake Youngs Park	Recreation	9	5	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Lake Youngs Trail Site	Multi-Use	9	0	0	Site is owned by others, KC manages by agreement
Lake Youngs Trailhead	Recreation	9	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Lakewood Park	Recreation	8	29	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Landsburg Kanaskat Trail Site	Recreation	9	21	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Landsburg Trailhead	Multi-Use	9	38	0	Major purpose is parking and trailhead
Levdansky Park	Recreation	9	17	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Little Si Natural Area	Ecological	3	29	0	These parcels are under negotiation for transfer to WA State DNR
Maple Ridge Highlands Open Space	Multi-Use	9	588	0	Need to review 4:1 covenants/conditions (5% active rec)
Maple Valley Heights Park	Recreation	9	3	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Maple Valley Lake Wilderness Trail Site	Recreation	9	43	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Maplewood Heights Park	Recreation	9	19	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Maplewood Park	Recreation	9	45	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Marymoor Bellevue Ballfield Complex	Recreation	3	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Marymoor Park	Recreation	3	613	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Maury Island Marine Park - portion	Multi-Use	8	51	0	Mining-zoned parcels excluded
May Creek Park - County	Ecological	9	47	0	In UGA/city, pending annexation
May Valley Park	Recreation	9	54	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
McGarvey Park Open Space	Multi-Use	9	401	2	Need to review 4:1 covenants/conditions (5% active rec)
Mirrormont Park	Multi-Use	9	11	0	Neighborhood park -CPG grant

**Summary List of High Conservation Value Properties - sorted alphabetically**  
**Charter Open Space Amendment**

Moellendorf	TDR	9	0	8	In UGA; and Private property, no public access; needs flexibility to comply with easement conditions
Moss Lake Natural Area - portion	Ecological	3	54	0	Parcels are IAC active recreation
Mount Peak Farm	Resource	9	116	0	Farmland Preservation Program covenants apply
Mull 1 (Herbert Mull)	TDR	9	0	9	Already owned in fee as Soos Creek Park/Trail
Mullen Slough Natural Area	Ecological	7	14	0	These parcels are under negotiation for transfer to City of Kent
New Concept Homes - AKA Mull2	TDR	5	0	39	Already owned in fee as Soos Creek Park/Trail
North Green River Park	Multi-Use	5 & 7	107	0	IAC \$\$ and portion in UGA
North Meridian Park	Multi-Use	5	35	0	UGA
North Shorewood Park	Recreation	8	6	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Northhilla Beach Natural Area	Ecological	8	4	0	Recent acquisition; current proposal to surplus one parcel under review.
Northshore Athletic Fields	Recreation	3	19	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Novelty Hill Little League Fields	Recreation	3	7	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Park Orchard Park	Recreation	5	6	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Patterson Creek Preserve Forest	Resource	3	0	243	Recent & future plats are changing easement boundaries, need to redraw easements to include in future.
Petrovitsky Park	Multi-Use	9	93	0	UGA
Pinnacle Peak Park - portion	Multi-Use	9	29	0	REET-funded parcel may have more intensive recreational use
Pipeline Number 5 Trail Site	Recreation	7	0	1	All active recreation sites are excluded
Preston Athletic Fields	Recreation	3	12	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Preston Mill	Recreation	3	23	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Preston Park	Recreation	3	1	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Preston Ridge Park	Multi-Use	3	190	0	Future plans & community expectations not clear - arboretum, etc.
Preston Snoqualmie Trail Site	Recreation	3	96	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Puget Sound Park	Recreation	8	5	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Quigley Park	Recreation	3	1	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Rattlesnake Mountain Scenic Area	Multi-Use	3	1857	0	KC only owns small portion - majority is owned by WSDNR and jointly managed
Ravensdale Park	Recreation	9	42	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Redmond Ridge Park	Recreation	3	10	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Redmond Ridge Trail Site	Recreation	3	0	1	All active recreation sites are excluded
Redmond to Redmond Watershed Trail Site	Recreation	3	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Redmond Watershed Addition Park	Recreation	3	2	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Redmond Watershed Trail Site	Recreation	3	1	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Renton Park	Multi-Use	9	19	0	UGA
Renton Pool Site	Recreation	9	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Renton Shop Site	Recreation	9	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Rock Creek Natural Area - portion	Ecological	9	57	0	Fee parcels may be added pending UGA shift in 2008 Comp Plan Amendment
Salmon Creek Park	Recreation	8	5	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Sammamish River Farm	Resource	3	18	0	Farmland Preservation Program covenants apply
Sammamish River Trail Site	Multi-Use	1 & 3	128	0	Portion of site is owned by others, KC manages by agreement
Sierra Heights Park	Recreation	9	8	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Site 1 Duwamish	Ecological	8	3	0	In UGA/city, pending annexation
Sixty Acres Park	Recreation	3	90	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Skyway Park	Recreation	2	23	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Snoqualmie Valley Trail Site	Recreation	3	437	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Soaring Eagle Regional Park	Multi-Use	3	627	0	Subject to BLA for transfer of portion - later date
Soos Creek Park and Trail	Multi-Use	5 & 9	729	3	Relationship to trail development/transfer to renton
Soos Creek Shop Complex	Recreation	9	6	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
South County Ballfields	Recreation	7	21	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Southern Heights Park	Recreation	8	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Sunset Playfield	Recreation	8	14	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Sunset Shop Site	Recreation	8	3	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Swamp Creek Park	Ecological	1	40	0	In UGA/city, pending annexation
Tanner Landing Park	Multi-Use	3	41	0	Future use development planned
Tollgate Farm - portion	Multi-Use	3	195	0	Portion of site transferring to North Bend
Tolt Pipeline Trail Site	Recreation	1 & 3	0	142	All active recreation sites are excluded
Tolt River - John MacDonald Park	Multi-Use	3	528	0	Includes significant active recreation
Trust for Public Land (Tollgate)	TDR	3	0	161	Already included in Tollgate Farm
Uplands Forest	Resource	3	0	353	Recent & future plats are changing easement boundaries, need to redraw easements to include in future.

**Summary List of High Conservation Value Properties - sorted alphabetically**  
 Charter Open Space Amendment

Vashon Pool Site	Recreation	8	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Vashon Shop Site	Recreation	8	0	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
Ventis Capital, LLC	TDR	5	0	1	Already owned by Kent
West Hill Park	Recreation	1	8	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
West Sammamish Trail Site	Recreation	1 & 3	56	7	All active recreation sites are excluded
Weyerhaeuser King County Aquatic Center Site	Recreation	7	11	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
White Center Heights Park	Recreation	8	6	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
White Center Park	Recreation	8	10	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
White Center Pond Natural Area	Ecological	8	9	0	Parcel owned by DNRP - Stormwater Services
Whitney Bridge Park	Multi-Use	7 & 9	30	0	Boat launch and parking
Windsor Vista Park	Recreation	1	5	0	All active recreation sites are excluded
<b>Total Acreage Excluded</b>			<b>Fee</b>	<b>Easement</b>	
			<b>12,046</b>	<b>1,801</b>	



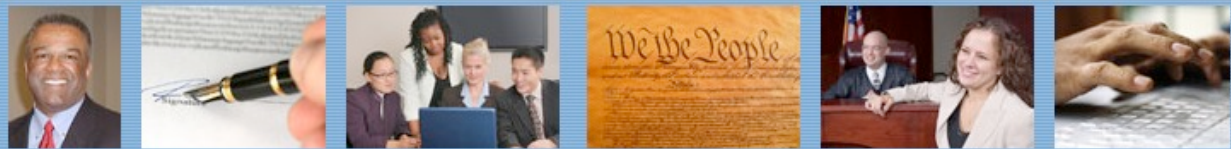
# King County Charter Review

Recognizing 40 years of good governance

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Email:  
[charter.review@kingcounty.gov](mailto:charter.review@kingcounty.gov)



## About the Open Space Amendment

Much of the appeal of King County as a desirable place to live and visit is the natural beauty and accessibility of the county's open spaces. As the population and prosperity of King County grows, however, there is increasing pressure to develop these irreplaceable natural lands.

The Open Space Amendment (OSA) responds to this situation by providing additional protection for over 100,000 acres of open space land owned by the county. These lands are among our most treasured natural spaces, and were originally acquired for their high conservation value.

This amendment to the county Charter strengthens protections against the sale or transfer of protected properties by the county. The conservation-oriented uses of the lands would also be permanently preserved. There would be no change in how residents currently use these spaces.

The specific properties protected by the Amendment were chosen for their high value in safeguarding the county's drinking water, habitat, recreation opportunities, and rural economy:



**Clean drinking water** – protects the water quality of rivers, lakes, streams, and aquifers that county residents rely upon for their drinking water.

**High-quality habitat** – provides some of the best habitat in the county for native vegetation and wildlife, including salmon, that are threatened by urbanization.

**Recreation** – provides open spaces for recreation opportunities such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, and wildlife viewing.

**Rural economy** – commercial timber production maintains a vibrant rural economy, as well as large open spaces important for recreation, wildlife habitat, and water quality.

A few of the over 100 open space properties that the OSA would protect include: Black Diamond Natural Area, Cougar Mountain Regional Park, Fall City Park West, Green River Natural Area, Maury Island Marine Park, Middle Fork Snoqualmie Natural Area,

## Endorsements

To date, the following organizations have endorsed the Open Space Amendment:

- Conservation Northwest
- Enumclaw Forested Foothills Recreation Association ([PDF](#))
- Futurewise ([PDF](#))
- Issaquah Environmental Council ([PDF](#))
- King County Conservation Voters ([PDF](#))
- League of Women Voters of Seattle and South King County ([PDF](#))
- Middle Green River Coalition ([PDF](#))
- Mountains to Sound Greenway ([PDF](#))
- Partnership for a Rural King County ([link](#))
- Sierra Club Cascade Chapter ([PDF](#))
- Upper Bear Creek Unincorporated Area Council ([PDF](#))
- Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition ([PDF](#))
- Water Tenders ([PDF](#))

## Open Space Amendment Resources

- [Common questions about the Open Space Amendment](#) ([PDF](#))
- [Summary of Open Space Amendment](#), including Charter language ([PDF](#))
- [County map of included properties](#) ([PDF](#))
- [Details about included properties](#) ([PDF](#))
- News about King County open space:
  - [King County Open Space](#) Seattle P.I. (March 26, 2008)
  - [Protecting Mt Peak](#) Seattle Times (March 2, 2008)
- Review [detailed site maps](#) of each of the properties.

Moss Lake Natural Area, Snoqualmie Forest, Upper Raging River Forest, and Tiger Mountain/Squak Mountain Corridor.

No new land would be purchased under this amendment. King County already owns the OSA-protected land, or the development rights. No direct costs are associated with OSA.

The OSA creates a strong barrier to the sale, transfer, or change of use of properties protected under the Charter. A majority vote of the people would be required to remove a property from Charter protection. The lands protected by the Amendment would remain as natural, open spaces unless an exception must be made for the public good, such as a utility project or in the event of a natural disaster.

For the OSA to take effect and protect the [initial list of properties](#) from sale, transfer, or change of use, a majority vote of the county council and the voters will be needed. In the future, the council may recommend additional properties, such as conservation land recently acquired by the county, for inclusion on the list. A vote of the people would then again be required to add the OSA's protection.

Photo credit: Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River, American Whitewater

Updated: April 1, 2009

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## Open Space Amendment – Common Questions

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### *Is the OSA an appropriate amendment for the Charter?*

A Charter amendment is needed in order to add the additional protection of a majority vote of the people to conservation lands already owned by the county. The OSA would create a 2-step process for removing properties from permanent protection: 1) the Council or the people would have to initiate an amendment to remove the property, and 2) a majority of voters would have to approve the amendment.

A Charter amendment provides a check to changes in county leadership, different political climates, alterations in growth management law, and other forces that could reverse current open space protections.

Along with this high level of protection, the OSA also provides government with the flexibility to conduct normal business and confront emergency situations. It is not a total lock on the properties. The Charter could be amended in the future to remove them from Charter protection if the public so desires, or if required for the public good.

### *Is there any precedent for such an Amendment?*

The King County Farmlands Preservation Program (FPP), a similar program to the OSA, has been successfully operating since 1979. The program permanently protects more than 13,000 acres of county farmland, and requires a public vote to remove a farm from protection. In the 30-year history of the FPP, the protected properties have withstood all challenges and legal battles.

While there is no known provision in a county charter that is similar to the OSA, King County has long been a leader in innovative ways to protect the natural environment. From the Transfer of Development Rights program to current efforts to combat climate change, the county has been recognized for developing new approaches to environmental challenges.

### *Isn't it odd to have a list of properties in the Charter?*

The Charter itself contains a number of provisions that are not directly related to the structure of county government. These provisions reflect the highest values of the county and county residents. For instance, Section 843 (Freedom of religion) guarantees absolute freedom of conscience in all matters of religious sentiment, belief, and worship to all county residents. And Section 840 (Anti-Discrimination) guarantees freedom from discrimination in county employment and contracting practices.

To legally implement this amendment as written, including requiring a majority vote of the people to add or remove properties from protection, the list of properties must be added to the Charter rather than adopted by ordinance.

### *Does the OSA change the use or management of protected properties?*

No, the OSA does not change the use of a property, but rather protects the current use. There would be no change in how residents or businesses currently use or manage these lands.

The conservation-oriented funding sources used to acquire these properties allow for a range of activities and management practices on the land. None of the properties are classified as wilderness or exclusive nature preserves. Practices compatible with conservation include

controlling invasive species, controlling and minimizing pest damage, and other resource management tools. The OSA creates no extra layer of approval for these activities.

The OSA does contain broad exceptions for the public good. It is not intended to restrict any actions the county may need to take to protect the public, comply with state or federal law, supply public utilities, or perform habitat restoration.

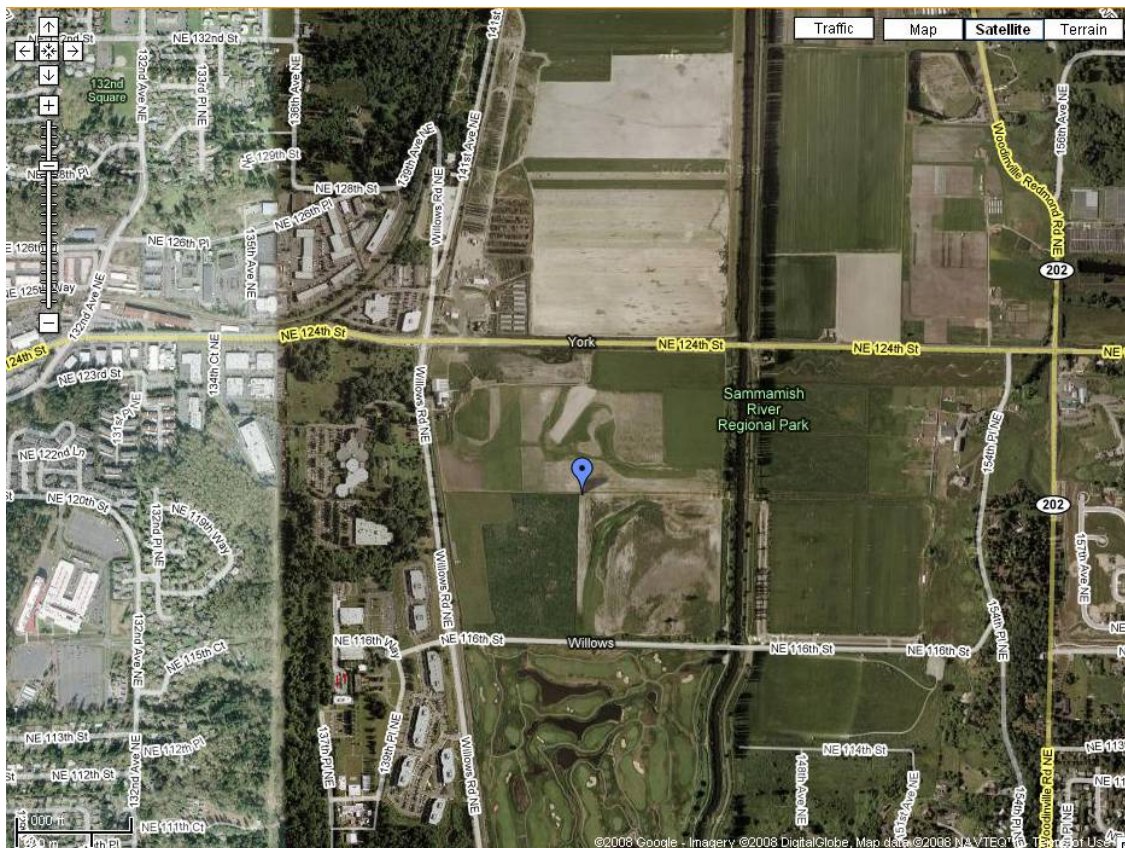
***Why do we need this amendment? What is the problem?***

The population of Central Puget Sound is expected to double to more than 7 million people over the next 100 years. Development pressure on King County land will only continue to increase, as will the demand for locally produced food, fiber, and timber.

One current example of protected land under pressure comes from the Farmlands Preservation Program. FPP lands are restricted to agricultural use, and require a public vote to be removed from protection. At the protected Muller Farm, the FPP's covenants worked as intended. The Farm is located between Woodinville, Kirkland, and Redmond in the Sammamish Valley Agricultural Production District, home to some of the most productive agricultural land in the state. It is also surrounded by rapid population growth and development.

In 1994, Lake Washington Youth Soccer Association purchased the 112-acre Muller Farm in Redmond with full awareness of the protective covenants, but with a belief that they could find a way around them. The legal challenges went all the way to the State Supreme Court, which determined that the land must remain agricultural. The FPP's covenants were integral to the Court's decision. The farm is now slated to become a horticultural teaching facility, and the soccer association is developing fields on non-agricultural land.

The following satellite map shows development approaching all around Mueller Farm.



September 24, 2007

Lois North and Mike Lowry  
Co-chairs, Charter Review Commission

Dear Co-chairs North and Lowry:

I am pleased to propose an amendment to Article 8 of the King County Charter, which will result in the protection of over 100,000 acres, in perpetuity, of high conservation value lands acquired by King County. Lands identified include Snoqualmie Tree Farm, Taylor Mountain, Island Center Forest among others. This amendment will require King County to adopt and periodically update an inventory of high conservation value properties. This amendment would prohibit King County from conveying, relinquishing, or converting the use of such properties except in certain specified circumstances. This ordinance would also submit the proposed charter amendment to the voters for their ratification or rejection at the November 2008 general election.

King County has acquired interests in open space properties in the form of fee simple ownership, conservation easements and development rights. The primary purposes of these acquisitions are to conserve, preserve, protect or enhance natural or scenic resources, timberland devoted primarily to the growth and harvest of timber for commercial purposes, streams, rivers, wetlands or soils, beaches or tidal marshes, fish or wildlife habitat, water quality, passive recreational opportunities, or visual quality along highway, road and street corridors for current and future generations of King County residents. Preserving open space also reduces urban sprawl, provides natural corridors in urban areas, and serves to mitigate the effects of human activities that contribute to climate change.

This charter amendment would establish a mechanism for protecting the highest conservation value open space properties in perpetuity. This amendment calls for the identification of properties and interests in properties that best serve open space purposes and to adopt and periodically update an inventory of these high conservation value properties. If you have any questions about this ordinance, please feel free to contact Kevin Brown, Division Director of the Parks and Recreation Division in the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-296-8631, or Rod Brandon, Director of Environmental Sustainability in the Office of the King County Executive, at 206-296-4039.

Thank you for your consideration of this ordinance.

Sincerely,

Ron Sims  
King County Executive

Enclosures



## **OSA Endorsers**

Conservation Northwest  
Enumclaw Forested Foothills Recreation Association  
Futurewise  
Issaquah Environmental Council  
King County Conservation Voters  
League of Women Voters of Seattle and South King County  
Middle Green River Coalition  
Mountains to Sound Greenway  
Partnership for a Rural King County  
Sierra Club Cascade Chapter  
Upper Bear Creek Unincorporated Area Council  
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition  
Water Tenders

[Links to these groups' letters of endorsement can be found online at:  
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/exec/charter/issues/openspace.aspx>.]

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**1. Parks Inventory – broken down by fee vs. easement, and by land category**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Fee (acres)</b>	<b>Easement (acres)</b>
Ecological	6,223	1,165
Multi-Use	12,949	41
Recreation	2,550	228
Resource	3,379	94,221
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,101</b>	<b>95,655</b>

**2. Recent Parks Acquisitions – broken down by fee vs. easement**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Fee (acres)</b>	<b>Easement (acres)</b>
2001	1,565	3,116
2002	907	546
2003	425	260
2004	494	90,478
2005	428	52
2006	925	47
2007	427	49

Typical funding sources include the following, along with additional federal and state grants and local sources of funding:

**Conservation Futures Annual allocations (1989 –present)** Since 1989, the Citizen Oversight Committee has made 11 recommendations on over 130 funded projects in 28 cities and Unincorporated King County, virtually all of which have been successfully implemented. Approximately \$10 million is available each year, of which approximately 1/3 goes to King County acquisitions.

**Parks Expansion Levy (2007 approved; 2008-2013)** Voter-approved capital project levy includes up to ~\$20 million over 6 years for county open space acquisitions.

**WRIA Forums (1999- present)** Building on the work of the RNA Forums, the WRIA Forums include citizens and elected officials that have developed priorities which have successfully competed for state and federal salmon recovery dollars targeted for habitat acquisition. WRIA forums help to direct allocation of state Salmon Recovery Funding Board funds and King Conservation District funds.

**3. Statistics about King County’s Rural Area**

King County covers 2,130 square miles (1.36 million acres). King County's 39 cities cover 387 square miles, or 18% of the county's total land area. Unincorporated King County, the territory outside any city, represents 82% of the county’s land area (1746 square miles or 1.11 million acres).

**King County Parks' Inventory**

King County Parks' 25,000 acres of fee-owned land comprises approximately 1.8% of the total King County land base and 2.2% of the unincorporated area. King County Parks' 95,600 acres of easements comprises approximately 7% of the total King County land base and 8.6% of the unincorporated area (of this, the single site Snoqualmie Forest comprises 6.9% and 8.5% respectively).

**Forest Production District:**

Sixty percent of the land area in King County is within the designated ((Forest Production District)) FPD. The FPD comprises 1,300 square miles (825,000 acres) of forestland in east King County. Most of this land is held in large blocks of contiguous ownership. About 70% of the FPD is in public ownership: parts of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, including wilderness areas, state and county parks, Washington State Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) lands, and watersheds for the cities of Seattle and Tacoma. In King County, over 350,000 acres are within the national forest, and 93,000 acres are managed by WDNR as trust lands. The FPD includes approximately 250,000 acres in private ownership, most of which is commercial forestland.

**Agricultural Production District:**

The APD comprises 42,000 acres. A 2003 survey of the Rural Area identified an additional 25,000 acres in active agriculture outside the APD.

Source: Proposed 2008 King County Comprehensive Plan Update

(<http://www.metrokc.gov/permits/codes/CompPlan/2008/ExecRec/Introduction-Exec08.pdf> & <http://www.metrokc.gov/permits/codes/CompPlan/2008/ExecRec/Chap3-Rural-Exec08.pdf>)