



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 2007-0337, **Version:** 3

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Clerk 7/31/2007

A MOTION directing the executive to convene a task force to undertake the review of measures intended to encourage the continued viability of agriculture within the Snoqualmie Valley Agricultural Production District.

WHEREAS, the Growth Management Act ("GMA"), Countywide Planning Policies ("CPPs") and King County Comprehensive Plan ("KCCP") require the delineation and protection of valuable and increasingly limited agricultural resource lands and supports regulations that serve to encourage the continuation of agriculture land uses, and

WHEREAS, King County has identified and designated a number of Agricultural Production Districts (APDs) totaling forty-two thousand acres and has implemented protections through the Agriculture zoning designation, and

WHEREAS, King County has enacted land use policies and regulations that focus much of the agriculture within the county towards the APDs and financially supports agriculture through:

1. Agricultural programs, such as the Farmland Preservation Program, Puget Sound Fresh and farm ditch maintenance; and
2. Funding of the King Conservation District for development of farm management plans, and

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie Valley APD is the single, largest APD in King County and historically has had a very productive agricultural industry, and

WHEREAS, the Snoqualmie Valley APD is regularly inundated by flood waters due to high levels of precipitation and in the past sixteen years has experienced four of the highest floods on record, with the

likelihood of more frequent occurrences in the future, and

WHEREAS, these flood water levels are often increased by a number and variety of factors, such as:

1. Storm water from development on the uplands that drain into the Snoqualmie Valley; and
2. The construction of flood control levees along the downstream portions of the Snoqualmie river that

result in the backup of flood waters, and

WHEREAS, the regular occurrence of flooding has greatly impacted agriculture within the Snoqualmie Valley APD due to:

1. The damage to crops;
2. An inability to plant due to water-logged soils;
3. A lack of elevated farm pads that provide safe havens for farm animals and on which structures could

be placed to protect to farm products, such as seeds, flower bulbs, hay and similar products, and equipment and allow the continuation of farm activities such as milking of dairy cows; and

4. The inability to rebuild flood-damaged buildings if the damage exceeds fifty percent of assessed value, and

WHEREAS, the federal Food and Drug Administration considers flood inundated food items, including produce in the ground, to be contaminated (also known as "adulterated") and must be destroyed, and

WHEREAS, the flood occurrences of November and December 2006 have served as a warning that unless King County evaluates, develops and implements significant protection measures, the continued viability of agriculture in the Snoqualmie Valley APD will be irretrievably compromised, and

WHEREAS, it is consistent with the GMA, CPPs and KCCP for the county to support not only the continuation, but also the future growth, of agriculture in the Snoqualmie Valley APD;

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

A. The King County executive is directed to convene a task force to review and make recommendations in regards to farm protection measures for the Snoqualmie Valley APD, such as, but not

limited to, the:

1. Expansion of opportunities to construct "farm pads" to save livestock, equipment, and products such as, seeds, bulbs and hay or other feed;
2. Ability to repair flood-damaged building regardless of the assessed value;
3. Application of expanded storm drainage technology and requirements, including berms, for urban developments which contribute storm water into the Snoqualmie river basin; and
4. Implementation of a flood control program within the Snoqualmie Valley APD that focuses upon the reduction of flooding to farmlands.

B. The task force shall be comprised of:

1. Representatives from departments or divisions such as but not limited to Department of Development and Environmental Services and Water and Land Resources Division as appointed by the King County executive;
2. A representative appointed by the King Conservation District Board;
3. A farmer appointed by the King County Agriculture Commission; and
4. A representative of the Hmong farming community.

C. The executive is directed to complete the task force review and forward recommendations to the King County council by February 1, 2008, in order to allow implementation of agriculture protection standards prior to the start of the 2008/2009 flood season. Eleven copies of the recommendations shall be filed with the clerk of the

council, who shall forward a copy to each councilmember and the lead staff of the growth management and natural resources committee, or its successor.