Legislation Details (With Text)

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File created:	1/19/2021	**In control:**	Mobility and Environment Committee
On agenda:		**Final action:**	2/9/2021
Enactment date:		**Enactment #:**	15806
Title:	A MOTION providing direction to the conservation futures advisory committee on priorities for allocating conservation futures tax levy proceeds.		
Sponsors:	Rod Dembowski		
Indexes:	Committees, Conservation Futures, levy		
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Attachments:	1. Motion 15806, 2. 2021-0047_SR_CFT_Priorities_BigFinnHill.docx		

Date	Ver.	Action By	Action	Result
2/9/2021	1	Metropolitan King County Council	Passed	Pass
1/27/2021	1	Mobility and Environment Committee	Recommended Do Pass Consent	Pass
1/19/2021	1	Metropolitan King County Council	Introduced and Referred	

Clerk 01/14/2021

A MOTION providing direction to the conservation futures advisory committee on priorities for allocating conservation futures tax levy proceeds.

WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.010 declares that it is in the best interest of the state to maintain, preserve, conserve and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space lands for the production of food, fiber and forest crops and to ensure the use and enjoyment of natural resources and scenic beauty for the economic and social well-being of the state and its citizens, and

WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.210 authorizes the county to acquire property rights "to protect, preserve, maintain, improve, restore, limit the future use of, or other otherwise conserve, selected open space land, farm and agricultural land, and timber land," and

WHEREAS, property right acquired under that authorization are defined as conservation futures, and

WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.230 authorizes the use of a property tax levy to fund the acquisition of

conservation futures and the maintenance and operation of acquired properties, and

WHEREAS, RCW 84.34.240 authorizes counties to establish a special conservation futures fund to which the levy proceeds are credited, and

WHEREAS, King County has established a conservation futures tax levy and fund, and

WHEREAS, King County is required to establish a process to help ensure, over time, that the distribution of the tax levy is throughout the county, and

WHEREAS, K.C.C. chapter 26.12 establishes an annual process for distribution of the tax levy to acquire open space lands, including green spaces, greenbelts, wildlife habitat and trail rights-of-way, and

WHEREAS, the process includes an advisory committee that makes project and funding allocation recommendations for each project to the executive, and

WHEREAS, the executive makes project and funding recommendations as part of the budget process, and

WHEREAS, K.C.C. 26.12.010 allows the council to adopt a motion providing direction to the conservation futures advisory committee on priorities for evaluating project applications, and

WHEREAS, K.C.C. 26.12.025 establishes criteria for conservation futures project selection, which provides: "wildlife habitat or rare plant reserve; salmon habitat and aquatic resources; scenic resources; community separator; historic or cultural resources; urban passive-use natural area or greenbelt; park, open space or natural corridor addition; and passive recreation opportunity in an area with unmet needs; and projects that seek to redress historic disparities in access to or health benefits of open space in opportunity areas. Additional criteria may include: educational or interpretive opportunity; impact to open space resources; feasibility, including ownership complexity, a willing seller or sellers or community support; partnerships; if the property identified in an adopted comprehensive plan, park open space, habitat, cultural resource or community plan; transfer of development rights participation; stewardship and maintenance; regional significance; adopted financial policies; and any other criteria consistent with chapter 84.34 RCW," and Motion 15513 gives

additional detail on project eligibility criteria, and

WHEREAS, Big Finn Hill park, comprised of 220-acres, 9.5 miles of trails, and numerous recreational opportunities, is a beloved regional park and a treasured asset of King County, and

WHEREAS, Big Finn Hill park is an urban oasis and visitors to the park have the opportunity to enjoy ballfields, playgrounds, trails, mountain biking, open space and dense native vegetation, and

WHEREAS, the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance, a local community group, has been instrumental in preserving and protecting dozens of acres of open space for the benefit of the community, and has volunteered countless hours to preserve, maintain and expand Big Finn Hill park, and

WHEREAS, the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance has identified and is working to preserve in its natural state, nearly seven acres of privately held property, known as the Kosalos parcels, adjacent to Big Finn Hill park, and

WHEREAS, the Kosalos parcels provide important riparian habitat for rarer urban wildlife such as bobcat, long-tailed weasel, river otter and numerous bird species, and

WHEREAS, the Kosalos parcels contains aquatic resources including a substantial portion of Denny creek and portions of the Denny creek headwaters, and protecting that stretch of the waterway will help protect water quality and flow regime downstream in sections of the stream that could be suitable for salmonids, and help preserve habitat connectivity between Lake Washington and the uplands and wetlands, and

WHEREAS, the Kosalos parcels are dominated by native vegetation, including native tree covering of cottonwoods and Douglas firs, important habitat elements for wildlife, and

WHEREAS, preserving the Kosalos parcels will expand an urban passive-use natural area adjacent to Big Finn Hill park and prevent the development of the parcel, which is permitted to allow more than twenty single-family homes, and

WHEREAS, use of conservation future tax levy proceeds for purchase of property rights in the area of the Big Finn Hill park and the Kosalos parcels for wildlife habitat, aquatic resources, urban passive-use natural

area and an addition to an existing open space area meets the criteria in K.C.C. 26.12.025;

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

A. The council establishes as a priority for the conservation futures advisory committee's consideration during the annual project selection and funding recommendation process one or more projects that includes the purchase or property rights for the purpose of wildlife habitat, aquatic resources, urban passive-use natural area or open space system addition in or near Big Finn Hill park, including parcel numbers 2426049033, 2426049032 and 2426049015, to preserve the existing open space.

B. The department of natural resources and parks, water and land resources division, is requested to work with landowners and jurisdictions in which properties reflecting this priority is located, in submitting project proposals that meet this priority, as

part of the 2021 conservation futures tax levy funding selection process provided for in K.C.C. 26.12.010.

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