

## Legislation Text

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A MOTION providing direction to the conservation futures citizen oversight committee on priorities for allocating conservation futures tax levy funds.

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 this 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 a citizen oversight 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 citizen oversight 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 or open space system addition; and transfer of development rights program implementation. Additional criteria may include: passive recreation; education/interpretive opportunity; threat of loss of open space resources; ownership complexity; partnerships; stewardship and maintenance; and any other criteria consistent with RCW 84.34.020," and

WHEREAS, Molasses creek is known to be used by fish or meets the physical criteria to be potentially used by fish, and as a result is a valuable resource, both for the local Fairwood community and for the larger Cedar River watershed, and

WHEREAS, Molasses creek is in an area identified as an Urban and Natural River Corridor in the executive's Land Conservation and Preservation Work Plan, and

WHEREAS, portions of Molasses creek are managed as open space and valuable habitat as part of the Soos Creek park and Soos Creek trail, while other portions of Molasses creek have undergone projects to improve fish passage, preserve and maintain water quality and prevent flooding, and

WHEREAS, a number of properties along Molasses creek in unincorporated King County are owned by the King County road services division and have been determined surplus, presenting opportunities to preserve open space, protect a valuable riparian corridor, provide protection for migrating fish and provide opportunities for trail connections, and

WHEREAS, use of conservation future tax levy funds for purchase of property rights in the Molasses creek area for wildlife habitat, aquatic resources or open space system addition 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 citizen oversight 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 or open space system addition in or near Molasses creek in the unincorporated Fairwood community, 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 2018 conservation futures tax levy funds selection process provided for in K.C.C. 26.12.010.