

April 17, 2026

**OFFICE OF THE HEARING EXAMINER
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

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**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE KING
COUNTY COUNCIL FOR CURRENT USE
ASSESSMENT APPLICATION**

SUBJECT: Department of Natural Resources and Parks file no. **E25CT029**
Proposed ordinance no. **2026-0045**
Parcel nos. **112606-9036 and 112606-9039**

JEFF SMITH AND CLOVER BACHMAN

Application for Current Use Assessment under the Public Benefit Rating System

Location: 17317 W Snoqualmie Valley Road NE, Duvall

Applicants: **Jeff Smith and Clover Bachman**
17317 W Snoqualmie Valley Rd NE
Duvall, WA 98019
Telephone: (425) 628-5274
Email: cubachman@gmail.com

King County: Department of Natural Resources and Parks
represented by **Bill Bernstein**
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Seattle, WA 98104
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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Department's Recommendation: Approve 9.19 acres on parcel 112606-9036 and 10.86 acres on parcel 112606-9039 for an 80% reduction in appraised value.

Examiner's Recommendation: Approve 9.19 acres on parcel 112606-9036 and 10.86 acres on parcel 112606-9039 for an 80% reduction in appraised value.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND:

Per Ch. 20.36 KCC, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) transmitted the subject application along with its Report for Property Enrollment in the Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs) File No. E25CT029, to the Examiner.

The Examiner conducted a remote public hearing on the application on April 9, 2026. Bill Bernstein, representing DNRP, presented the application and DNRP's recommendation. Applicant Clover Bachman also participated.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

1. Except as modified herein, the facts set forth in DNRP's staff report and testimony at the April 9, 2026, public hearing are correct and incorporated here by reference. We will provide copies of this report and DNRP's staff report to the King County Council for final action.
2. The property at issue is at 17317 W Snoqualmie Valley Road NE, Duvall, Parcel Nos 112606-9036 and 112606-9039, owned by the Applicants Jeff Smith and Clover Bachman.
3. The Applicants timely filed an application with King County for current use assessment of the above identified property under the PBRs to begin in 2026.
4. Timely and proper legal notice of the public hearing on the application was provided. Ex 3.
5. A list of the PBRs Open Space Resource categories requested by the Applicants and identified by DNRP as relevant to the property are provided below. Categories that DNRP determined were eligible (or eligible with contingencies) for credit are assigned the applicable number of points.

PBRs categories:	Buffer to public or current use classified land	3
	Forest stewardship land	*
	Rural open space	5
	Rural stewardship land	0
	Scenic resource, viewpoint or view corridor	5
	Significant wildlife or fish habitat	5
	Surface water quality buffer	10
	Watershed protection area	5
	<hr/> Total points awarded	<hr/> 33

The DNRP-recommended score of 33 points results in a 80% reduction in the appraised value of the enrolled portion of the property. Each category where points are recommended is discussed below.

6. **Buffer to public or current use classified land – 3 points.** The property is abutting land participating in the PBRs program to the north and south parcels 112606 9009 and 112606-9040). The enrolling open space area is providing a buffer of native vegetation of more than fifty feet to this adjacent land, which exceeds the category's requirement. Credit for this category is recommended.
7. **Rural open space – 5 points.** The property is in the rural area and contains more than twenty acres of contiguous forested open space, which is more than the category's required five acre minimum.
8. **Scenic resource, viewpoint or view corridor – 5 points.** To be eligible for this category, a property must be either a) a scenic natural resource significant to the character of the county, b) provide a viewpoint accessible to the public or c) contribute to a recognized county view corridor. The property is located along the county's designated West Snoqualmie Valley Road/Carnation Farm Road Heritage Corridor and contains over twenty acres of forested open space. The property's natural features are significant to the local area, contribute to the aesthetic character of the Snoqualmie Valley and are visible to those who travel West Snoqualmie River Road.
9. **Significant wildlife or fish habitat – 5 points.** The property contains habitat for numerous wildlife species, including foraging and nesting habitat for the pileated woodpecker, which is identified in King County's Comprehensive Plan as a Species of Local Importance (E-328(e)). Upon conducting a site visit, program staff determined areas of the forest on the property are of sufficient age and diversity to support the species regular use of the property. Award of this category is consistent with habitat as defined by KCC 20.36.100, section B.15.a (1).
10. **Surface water quality buffer – 10 points.** A portion of stream, likely Type N, runs along a ravine along the north property line. As required by county code (KCC 21A.24.358.B), the buffer width required for Type N waters is 100 feet. In order to be eligible for this category, the participating land must provide a buffer greater than 1.5 times that required (or 150 feet) for five points to be awarded, provide a buffer greater than two times that required (or 200 feet) for eight points to be awarded, or provide a buffer greater than three times that required (or 300 feet) for ten points to be awarded. The owner is providing a qualifying buffer of native vegetation to the south of this stream that averages more than 600 feet in width, which is more than three times the buffer required. Credit for this category is therefore recommended at the ten-point award level.
11. **Watershed protection area – 5 points.** To be eligible for this category, the enrolling forested area must consist of additional forest cover beyond that required by county or applicable local government regulation and must be at least one acre or sixty-five percent of the property acreage, whichever is greater. The enrolling open space contains 20.05 acres of native forest cover which is more than 65% of the total property acreage and there are no additional forest retention regulations in place for this property.

12. Contingencies, Conditions, and Requirements.
 - A. An additional 5 points under the “forest stewardship land” category is also possible. The property contains more than twenty acres of contiguous forest. The owners need to update their existing forest plan and have it approved by county forestry staff.
 - B. If a forest stewardship is approved by the department on or before December 31, 2026, credit for this category should be awarded administratively.
 - C. Award of credit under this category will increase the total points for the two lots to 38, which will result in a current use valuation of 10% of assessed value for the enrolled portion of the property.
 - D. Award of this category may allow forestry activities to occur in the participating open space area. It is the owner’s responsibility to apply for and receive the necessary approvals from the applicable state and local governmental agencies for forestry activities that require a permit or approval, such as clearing and grading. Award of this category requires an annual progress report from the owner (see below, Section B. 12.), which should be sent to PBRS staff by either email or other agreed to method.
 - E. The Examiner incorporates all conditions and requirements identified in the PBRS Staff Report. Ex. 1.
13. Enrollment Acreage. The Applicants requested 9.19 acres for parcel 112606-9036 and 10.66 acres for parcel 112606-9039. DNRP recommends 9.19 acres for parcel 112606-9036 and 10.86 acres for parcel 112606-9039 for enrollment in the PBRS program. (Enrollment acreage is the entire parcel less the excluded area, as calculated by DNRP. In the event the County Assessor’s official parcel size is revised, the PBRS acreage shall be administratively adjusted to reflect that change.)
14. Approval of 33 points and a current use valuation of 20% of assessed value and conditional approval of 5 additional points and 10% of assessed value for the recommended acreage is consistent with Ch. 20.36 KCC and with the purposes and intent of King County to maintain, preserve, conserve, and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space lands and to assure the use and enjoyment of natural resources and scenic beauty for the economic and social well-being of King County and its citizens.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. APPROVE credit for 33 points for the PBRS categories listed above, on 9.19 acres for parcel 112606-9036 and 10.86 acres for parcel 112606-9039 for a current use valuation of 20% of assessed value for the enrolled portion of the property. Approval should be subject to any conditions and requirements listed herein or incorporated from the DNRP staff report.
2. CONDITIONALLY APPROVE additional credit for the “forest stewardship land” category, subject to submittal of an approved forest stewardship plan by December 31, 2026. Award of credit under this category will increase the point total to 38 points, resulting in a current use valuation of 10% of assessed value for the enrolled portion of the property.

DATED April 17, 2026.



Devon Shannon
Hearing Examiner

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

A party may appeal an Examiner report and recommendation by following the steps described in KCC 20.22.230. By **4:30 p.m.** on **May 11, 2026**, an electronic appeal statement must be sent to Clerk.Council@kingcounty.gov, to hearingexaminer@kingcounty.gov, and to the party email addresses on the front page of this report and recommendation. Please consult KCC 20.22.230 for the exact filing requirements.

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

MINUTES OF THE APRIL 9, 2026, HEARING ON THE APPLICATION OF JEFF SMITH AND CLOVER BACHMAN, FILE NO. E25CT029

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

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

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