

April 28, 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. **E25CT030**
Proposed ordinance no. **2026-0053**
Parcel no. **883580-0580**

RICHARD YOUNG

Application for Current Use Assessment under the Public Benefit Rating System

Location: 16532 426th Way SE, North Bend, WA 98045

Applicant: **Richard C. Young**
530 Merritt Ave. NE
North Bend, WA 98052
Telephone: (206) 933-7792
Email: dick.c.young@comcast.net

King County: Department of Natural Resources and Parks
represented by **Megan Kim**
201 S. Jackson Street Suite 5601
Seattle, WA 98104
Telephone: (206) 477-4788
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SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Department's Recommendation: Approve 4.32 acres for 60% reduction in appraised value.
Examiner's Recommendation: Approve 4.32 acres for 60% 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. E25CT030, to the Examiner.

The Examiner conducted a remote public hearing on the application on April 23, 2026. Megan Kim, representing DNRP, presented the application and DNRP’s recommendation. Applicant Richard C. Young attended but did not participate.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

1. Except as modified herein, the facts set forth in DNRP’s staff report and testimony at the April 23, 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 16532 426th Way SE, North Bend, WA 98045, Parcel No. 883580-0580, owned by the Applicant Richard C. Young.
3. The Applicant 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.
5. A list of the PBRs Open Space Resource categories 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:	Aquifer protection area	5
	Forest stewardship land	*
	Rural open space	*
	Significant wildlife or fish habitat	5
	Watershed protection area	5
	Total points awarded	15

The DNRP-recommended score of 15 points results in a 60% reduction in the appraised value of the enrolled portion of the property. Each category where points are recommended is discussed below.

6. **Aquifer protection area – 5 points.** The entire property is located in an area designated as a critical aquifer recharge area (CARA 3). The natively forested area is greater than one acre in size and meets the minimum required acreage for this category.
7. **Significant wildlife or salmonid habitat – 5 points.** A staff site visit established that the property contains habitat for the *Strix occidentalis* or common name Northern spotted owl, which is identified by Department of Fish and Wildlife as ‘endangered’ and federally

recognized as ‘threatened’. 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.B.15.a(1).

8. **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 more than four acres of native forest cover which is more than 65% of the total property acreage and is more forest cover than required by county regulation for this property.
9. **Contingencies, Conditions, and Requirements.**
 - A. An additional 10 points may be awarded administratively for the “forest stewardship land” and “rural open space” categories.
 - B. **Forest stewardship land – 5 points.** To be eligible for this category, the property must contain at least four acres of contiguous forestland. This property contains slightly more than four acres of contiguous forest and the owner is interested in developing a forest stewardship plan to improve the health and diversity of the property. If a forest stewardship plan is provided by November 1, 2026, and approved by the department on or before December 31, 2026, then credit for this category should be awarded administratively.
 - C. **Rural open space – 5 points.** To be eligible for this category, a property must be located in a rural area and be enrolling at least five acres of native vegetation. Under current conditions the rural property contains only 4.32 acres of natively vegetated contiguous open space. However, if the property owner qualifies for the forest stewardship plan, they will simultaneously exceed the 5-acre requirement for this category. If a forest stewardship plan addressing the needed restoration of the 0.71 acres outlined in green is provided by October 1, 2026, and approved by December 31, 2026, the enrolling acreage would increase to 5.03 acres and credit for this category could be awarded administratively.
 - D. Award of credit under these categories will add 10 points, resulting in an 80% reduction in the appraised value of 5.03 acres of property.
 - E. The Examiner incorporates all conditions and requirements identified in the PBRS Staff Report. Ex. 1.
10. **Enrollment Acreage.** The Applicant requested 5.0 acres and DNRP recommends 4.32 acres of the subject property be enrolled 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.)
11. Approval of 15 points and a current use valuation of 40% of assessed value for 4.32 acres, and conditional approval of 10 additional points and 20% of assessed value on

5.03 acres, 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 the "aquifer protection area," "significant wildlife or fish habitat" and "watershed protection area" categories (15 points), on 4.32 acres on parcel 883580-0580, for a current use valuation of 40% 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 and rural open space categories, if a forest stewardship plan is provided by November 1, 2026, and approved by the department on or before December 31, 2026. Award of credit under these categories will increase the total points awarded to 25 points, resulting in a current use valuation of 20% of assessed value for the enrolled portion of the property. Administrative approval should be subject to any conditions and requirements listed herein or incorporated from the DNRP staff report.

DATED April 28, 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 22, 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 23, 2026, HEARING ON THE APPLICATION OF
RICHARD YOUNG, FILE NO. E25CT030**

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:

Exhibit no. 1	DNRP staff report
Exhibit no. 2	<i>Reserved for future submission of the affidavit of bearing 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