



King County

Ron Sims

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CLERK
KING COUNTY COUNCIL

2007-362

June 15, 2007

The Honorable Larry Gossett
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
COURTHOUSE

Dear Councilmember Gossett:

Enclosed is a motion and associated report submitted in response to Proviso 1 in Section 72 of the 2007 King County Adopted Budget, Ordinance 15652. The proviso states:

P1 PROVIDED THAT:

Of this appropriation, \$250,000 shall not be expended or encumbered until the council approves by motion a report submitted by the executive on noxious weed control by county land managers. The report shall include a detailed list of county lands, the responsible land manager and an evaluation of the land manager's effort to control noxious weeds, with an emphasis on county land with a history of repeated infestations. The report shall contain recommendations on how county land managers might better control weeds on county land. This report shall cover lands managed by the roads division, parks and recreation division, water and land resources division, solid waste division, wastewater division, facilities management division and metro transit division.

The report and its accompanying motion respond to King County Council and community concerns about the effectiveness of noxious weed management on county lands. These concerns predominantly relate to: 1) the impacts of noxious weeds on the public value of the county lands, 2) the potential for the spread of noxious weeds to adjacent private lands, and 3) a perceived lack of fairness regarding the regulation of noxious weeds on nearby private lands.

A proviso in the 2002 Adopted Budget required the King County Noxious Weed Control Program employ a full time specialist to focus on county lands weed control issues and complaints. The report illustrates that the work of this person has resulted in better management of regulated noxious weeds on county lands and a decrease in community complaints.



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The report identifies significant achievements of county land managers dealing with this difficult issue, as well as potential areas for future improvement. The report's recommendations aim to build on the progress made to date and set directions for future advances. These recommendations were developed after extensive consultation with county land managers and other stakeholders.

The major recommendations of this report are to: 1) develop a planned, accountable approach to the management of noxious weeds on county lands, based on a detailed survey; 2) increase funding for noxious weed management and improve budget consistency and transparency; 3) improve efficiency by adoption of better weed management practices; and 4) expand community participation in county land weed management and stewardship activities.

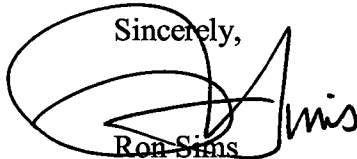
These recommendations address the community concerns about noxious weed management on county lands in a cost effective manner. Only a well coordinated long-term approach will be successful in tackling large-scale challenges of this nature.

I hope you will support my recommendation to approve the motion enacting these recommendations. They will support a better planned, effectively resourced and more accountable long-term strategy for the control of noxious weeds. This approach will restrict the further spread of these weeds, and within existing infested areas, reduce their impacts to the environment, public health and recreational use of county lands.

If you have any questions about the motion or the report, please feel free to contact Steven Burke, Noxious Weeds Control Manager in the Water and Land Resources Division with the Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-205-6927.

Thank you for consideration of this motion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Sims", is written over a circular scribble.

Ron Sims
King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Ross Baker, Chief of Staff
Shelley Sutton, Policy Staff Director
Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

Pam Bissonnette, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Mark Isaacson, Division Director, Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD),
DNRP

Steven J. Burke, Noxious Weeds Control Manager, WLRD, DNRP
Bob Cowan, Director, Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
Steve Fields, Budget Supervisor, OMB