



## King County

### **Dow Constantine**

King County Executive

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[www.kingcounty.gov](http://www.kingcounty.gov)

June 8, 2022

The Honorable Claudia Balducci  
Chair, King County Council  
Room 1200  
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

This letter transmits a proposed Ordinance that, if enacted, would update King County's High Conservation Value Property Inventory by adding 20 new properties, adding acreage to 40 previously listed properties to the Inventory, and making technical corrections as specified in K.C.C. 26.14.010 and Section 897 of the King County Charter. The High Conservation Value Property Inventory protects high conservation value open space land in perpetuity. Adding property to the inventory preserves the character of open space, reduces urban sprawl, provides natural corridors in urban areas, conserves working forests, protects water quality and habitat, and sequesters carbon.

The updated inventory would include 125 total sites, with a total acreage of 18,679 acres owned outright without any limitations or restrictions other than local zoning requirements, easements, or liens and 143,011 acres protected via easement. Being added to the inventory provides additional conservation protection, as described below. There are no fiscal impacts to this proposed legislation.

In November 2009, King County voters amended the King County Charter by adding a new Section 897 that provides a greater level of protection for certain high conservation value properties where King County has a real property interest. Placing a property on the inventory means that the use of the land cannot change from the allowable uses at the time of acquisition without a supermajority vote of the King County Council. In 2015, the King County Council adopted the first update to the High Conservation Value Property Inventory with Ordinance 18177, adding 3,090 acres in fee and 845 acres in easement to the list of protected lands, and making technical corrections to the inventory.

Attached to this letter are three supplemental documents, two of which provide detailed descriptions of the 2015 inventory and the updated inventory: 1) Inventory – Detailed 2020 Update Information, which highlights the changes being made to the 2015 High Conservation Value Property Inventory, and 2) Technical Corrections Package, which documents corrections needed to update the 2015 High Conservation Value Property Inventory to reflect current and

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accurate information. The third supplemental document attached to this letter, a Public Meetings Summary, provides a detailed overview of the community engagement required as part of this process.

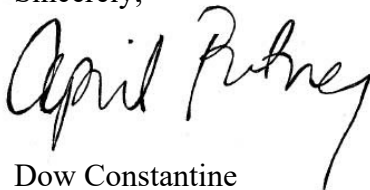
In terms of outreach, during September and October 2021, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) staff presented recommended additions to the Inventory to all affected Unincorporated Area Councils that were meeting virtually. Staff also shared written updates with key groups that were not meeting or declined a briefing. A new interactive map of proposed inventory additions was made available on the DNRP website beginning in August 2021, and an invitation to comment was published in the September Unincorporated Area Council newsletter. Public comments could be provided at briefings and by submitting feedback via a designated open space charter email address.

This proposed Ordinance addresses the King County Strategic Plan healthy environment goal by adding properties to the High Conservation Value Property Inventory, further preserving and protecting open space throughout King County. These natural lands, especially forested properties, also provide important climate benefits, such as sequestering carbon, which is an important element of King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance. This legislation will strengthen protection for high-value open space for future generations and ensure that the High Conservation Value Property Inventory accurately reflects King County property interests.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Warren Jimenez, Division Director of the Parks and Recreation Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-477-4525.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff

Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council

Shannon Braddock, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Karan Gill, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Mina Hashemi, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)

Warren Jimenez, Division Director, Parks and Recreation Division, DNRP