



Legislation Text

File #: 2013-0156, **Version:** 1

Clerk 03/21/2013

AN ORDINANCE making supplemental appropriations of \$583,000 to the limited general obligation bond redemption fund and \$8,280,000 to the conservation futures fund for the purpose of buying a conservation easement, and paying related debt service costs, over the King County portion of the White River Tree Farm; and amending the 2013 Budget Ordinance, Ordinance 17476, Sections 130 and 136, as amended, and Attachment H, as amended.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. Findings:

A. The White River Tree Farm is a privately-owned forestland located within King and Pierce counties. The property totals just over 86,000 acres, with just over 43,000 acres of the property in King County. The property has been managed as a working forest for nearly one hundred years. It is a substantial portion of a larger, contiguous piece of undeveloped forestland, which includes Washington state Department of Natural Resources lands, United States Forest Service lands and Plum Creek Timber lands to the north, the Clearwater Wilderness to the south, and United States Forest Service lands to the east and south, which stretch undeveloped all the way to Mount Rainier National Park. The White River Tree Farm property forms the southern border of the city of Tacoma watershed, which provides drinking water for the residents of Tacoma and south King County.

B. The White River Tree Farm property plays an important part of the local and regional timber resource industry and preserving it as a forest helps retain jobs and timber resources important to the local and

regional economy.

C. An easement preventing development at White River Tree Farm would provide significant environmental benefits including carbon sequestration and habitat for rainier elk, marbled murrelet, Chinook salmon, bull trout and northern spotted owls.

D. The White river runs through the middle of the property and preventing development of the property has ecological benefits and would also provide additional flood protection beyond those required by regulations.

E. Along with previous conservation easements secured at Snoqualmie forest, Raging River forest, and Plum Creek forest, as well as other King County owned forestland, and city, state and federally owned forest lands, conservation of the White River Tree Farm would help to complete a "wall against sprawl," ensuring public conservation of a nearly contiguous north-south wall of forestland in Eastern King County.

F. Conservation of the White River Tree Farm would bring the total amount of forestland conserved by King County to just over 200,000 acres, enabling King County to meet its commitment to conserve 200,000 acres of forest landscape as part of the 2004 Cascade Foothills Initiative.

G. The White River Tree Farm provides an undeveloped and forested scenic drive along State Highway 410 which the public uses on a regular basis to access Crystal Mountain Ski resort in the winter, and to access Mount Rainier National Park in the spring, summer and fall.

H. In November 2012, the King County council approved \$3,000,000 as initial funding toward a White River Tree Farm conservation easement acquisition.

I. Permanent financing for the acquisition of the White River Tree Farm conservation easement described in Attachment A to this ordinance will be provided through the issuance of limited tax general obligation bonds backed by conservation futures tax levy funds. These bonds are expected to be sold in the fall of 2013 or in 2014. Interim financing will be supplied through an interfund loan, pursuant to terms approved by the King County executive finance committee.

SECTION 2. Ordinance 17476, Section 130, as amended, is hereby amended by adding thereto and inserting therein the following:

LIMITED G.O. BOND REDEMPTION	\$583,000
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SECTION 3. Ordinance 17476, Section 136, as amended, is hereby amended by adding thereto and inserting therein the following:

BIENNIAL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM - From the several capital improvement project funds there are hereby appropriated and authorized to be disbursed the following amounts for the specific projects identified in Attachment A to this ordinance.

Fund	Fund Name	2013/2014
3151	CONSERVATION FUTURES	\$8,280,000
TOTAL		\$8,280,000

SECTION 4. Attachment A to this ordinance hereby amends Attachment H to Ordinance 17476, as amended, by adding thereto and inserting therein the projects listed in Attachment A to this ordinance.