



## Land Acquisition

### Objective:

Protect and restore water quality, biodiversity, open space, and ecosystems

### Strategy:

Support acquisition and stewardship of open space and natural areas

### Why is this strategy important?

Permanently protecting and conserving important open space land ensures that today's residents and future generations will enjoy the benefit of healthy ecosystems to support fish and wildlife, easy access to abundant recreational opportunities, open spaces for scenic views and rural character, and bountiful working lands to create a more sustainable regional economy. Acquisitions and protection can also help protect public safety through reducing flood risks, maintaining air and water quality, and providing innumerable other benefits of a healthy environment.

### How is our performance?

Of all parcels in the Rural, Forest, and Agricultural zones, King County has protected more than 180,000 acres through purchase of conservation easements or outright fee acquisition. This represents over 17 percent of all parcels in these land use classifications.

Of this acreage protected by King County, more than 85 percent is protected through conservation easements, where the land remains in private ownership and stewardship. This approach allows King County's to maximize benefits with available funds.

In 2011, fee and easement purchases resulted in conservation of 737 new acres.

King County continues to lead the region in protection of important places on the landscape through innovative voluntary market-based incentive programs like the Transfer of Development Rights and the Farmlands Preservation Programs, and by strategically applying a variety of funding sources to protect and conserve important lands.

### How is our performance?

- Consider enrolling your property in the Transfer of Development Right program or Farmland Preservation Program.
- Share your vision for land protection and conservation with King County staff or elected officials.

## Moving forward

King County will continue to encourage stewardship and conservation on privately-owned lands through effective program delivery of voluntary incentive programs and use available funding strategically to acquire high priority lands that will protect environmental quality for future generations. Budget allocations, regulatory and policy changes, economic conditions and opportunity for acquisition all play a role in land conservation and acquisition activities. Land acquisition and protection, outreach, and education toward improving stewardship and improving environmental behavior all contribute to the objectives in policy plans, such as the KC Comprehensive Plan, salmon restoration plans, flood hazard reduction plan, or the climate change adaptation plan.

## Related Links

[KC Transfer of Development Rights program](#)

[KC Farmland Preservation Program](#)

## Technical Notes

Data provided by King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

## Charts and Maps

### 2011 Acres and Parcels of Open Space in Rural King County

	Acres	Number of Parcels	Proportion of Rural Acres
All Rural parcels	1,065,718	106,381	100%
All Publicly-owned	624,961	5,420	59%
King County-owned in Fee	25,659	1,108	2%
King County Easement	159,843	1,094	15%
King County-protected by Fee or Easement*	184,204	2,137	17%

*\*Discrepancy between this percentage and sum of KC-Fee+KC Easements relates to overlap in cases where easements were acquired first, then land later purchased in fee.*

