KING COUNTY
LAND CONSERVATION
INITIATIVE
We can protect the livability, health, and ecological integrity of our region—for everyone—if we act now.
65,000 ACRES TO SUSTAIN US WE CAN STILL DECIDE
From Puget Sound to the crest of the Cascade Mountains, natural lands and green spaces close to home make King County a great place to live.
Clean air and water, mild temperatures, long walks, scenic vistas, every day beauty, and healthy food—all are made possible by the forests, parks, rivers, trails, and farms in and around the cities, towns and rural communities of King County.
Natural lands preserve the ecological integrity essential to support life.
Contact with nature extends our lives.
Access to our region’s natural, green, and open spaces boosts health, fitness, and relieves stress.
Our region’s beauty and quality of life are good for the economy, attracting new businesses and top talent.
Everyone deserves access to natural lands and green, open spaces.
As one of the fastest growing regions in the country, we risk losing the natural lands and green spaces that contribute to our high quality of life.
Over the next ten years, King County expects to add another 180,000 people, that’s **50 new residents every day**.
Many of the natural lands and green spaces we enjoy today are not protected. Working forests and farms that provide food, jobs, and a rural way of life are at risk unless we protect them.
Rivers providing important salmon habitat risk increased pollution, if we don’t protect the lands that surround them.
Popular trails can be lost forever if one privately owned segment is developed.
Densely populated cities need more green and open spaces to maintain their clean air and livability.
Many lower income neighborhoods already have less access and proximity to natural lands than do more affluent ones; we need to create new green and open spaces so everyone in our county enjoys the benefits.
Community leaders have come together to map, price, and prioritize 65,000 acres of critical natural lands and green spaces in King County.
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King County Land Conservation Advisory Group
Staff conducted more than 60 meetings with community leaders, conservationists, ecologists, civic leaders, open space equity advocates, landowners, real estate experts, tribal members, residents, and building experts.

In addition, staff had a total of 70 meetings with all 39 cities in King County.
Six categories of land

- Natural Lands
- Farmlands
- Rivers
- Urban Green Space
- Trails
- Forests
Natural lands for wildlife, clean air and water, recreation, and resilience in an uncertain future.
Forests and trees that support clean air, clean water, cooler summers, and recreation.
Farmlands and community gardens for healthy local food and prosperous agricultural communities.

Image source: PCC Farmland Trust
River corridors and lands for wildlife, salmon, and reduced flooding.
Lands that connect interrupted trails and communities, increase mobility, and inspire healthy living.
Neighborhood green and open spaces that filter pollutants and noise and support community—for everyone in our county.
King County began proactively conserving lands important to our health and ecology 50 YEARS AGO.

VALUES

RISK

PLAN

CONSIDERATIONS

OPPORTUNITY

Cougar Mountain Regional Wildland Park
Burke Gilman Trail
Middle Fork Snoqualmie
Bellevue Downtown Park
Green River Gorge
Snoqualmie Forest
Cedar River Trail
Marymoor Park
Duthie Hill Park
Tiger Mountain
Olympic Sculpture Park
If we continue at the current pace, it will take 70 years to preserve what we need to support our basic quality of life. And there’s no guarantee these lands will still be available.
We set a 30-year horizon to preserve our remaining natural lands and green spaces before they are lost and accelerate the effort to save $15 billion.
The Advisory Group’s final recommendations address: housing + cost + equity
We limit the reduction of available buildable lands to less than 3%. We keep the cost to $10/year for the average household.
We create a path to equity for low-income neighborhoods that have zero access or proximity to natural lands and their benefits. 500,000 PEOPLE live without access to green, open spaces.
Communities will determine the kinds of open spaces that would best meet their needs.

These might be:

- A forested buffer between homes and an industrial area or highway
- A river walk
- A community garden
- An open space for community gatherings
We have a smart path to protect the forests and farms, rivers and trails, open space and urban green spaces that make King County so special, if we act now.
The opportunity to protect precious natural lands still exists, but it won’t last forever.
Land is already expensive in King County, and prices are likely to continue to rise.
If we embrace these challenges and work together, we can protect natural lands close to home for people today and for generations to come.
So many things we can’t do anything about, THIS ONE WE CAN.