

STRATEGIC PLAN: YEARS 2015 - 2020

Mission

To promote the sustainable use of natural resources through responsible stewardship

Vision

King Conservation District will continue to be a leader in community based stewardship of natural resources and provides service to support economically viable working lands throughout the District.

Values

- ▶ Accountable
- ▶ Respectful
- ▶ Collaborative
- ▶ Empowering
- ▶ Trusted

Function

- The KCD facilitates community conservation through voluntary sustainable stewardship within and between the public and private sectors in the District and the region. The District has no regulatory or enforcement authority.
- The KCD supports working lands (eg: farms, marine industrial, forests, shellfish beds, etc.) as they effectively protect open space, optimally steward resources and are self-sustainable. KCD educates or coaches land managers (residential and commercial), schools, scientists, consultants and agencies on how to recognize and steward natural resources. KCD provides technical assistance and funding that supports solutions.
- In addition to funding its core programs, KCD offers grant funding to support stewardship congruent with its mission.
- The KCD works hand-in-hand with the local office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The NRCS develops and maintains current best management practices and standards, which KCD employs in the implementation of its projects.

King Conservation District Priorities

Urban and Rural Forestry

Rural Forestry - The King Conservation District will work with small-lot forest landowners across unincorporated King County to increase the resilience of the forested landscape and capture the ecological, recreational and other values of forests by helping landowners actively manage forestlands and open space areas.

Urban Forestry - KCD will expand conservation of urban tree canopies and grow green infrastructure where it is deemed most needed through partnerships with our member jurisdictions and their respective neighborhood and community organizations, groups and landowners. It will convene and use an Initiative Review Team to evaluate and identify projects for funding. The objective is to identify 6 jurisdictions by the end of CY 2015 to receive KCD technical assistance and cost-share and/or grant funding for urban forestry program/project implementation, and up to 3 additional jurisdictions each year thereafter until 15 jurisdictions have been selected and queued for program / project support. The recommendations of the Initiative Review Team/Work Group recommendations will be reported to the full Advisory Committee for concurrence and the KCD Board for approval.

Food and Farming

Sustainable, Equitable, and Resilient Regional Food System - KCD will address these challenges by working with our partners and technical experts to develop a regional grant program designed to build capacity in food production, transportation, storage, distribution, and access. *Urban Agriculture* - KCD will build on existing success, such as Seattle Tilth's Farm Works in Auburn and Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands in south Seattle as models of success and work together to innovate new pilot programs to learn from and adapt. *Rural Agriculture* - King Conservation District will increase its support of rural farmers through both increasing the number of plans to self-selected clients as well as expand current pilot efforts on sub-basin targeting to improve water, soil, and habitat quality in watersheds that exhibit poor benchmarks.

Raise literacy of policymakers and stakeholders of the value of and critical need to protect and expand farmland. Work with farming community to publish white paper articulating the intrinsic value of farmland and challenges facing farmers today and in the future.

Explore county-wide farm production strategic plan. Production and preservation can be more effective when partners participate in the planning process. *(Needs Board Input)*

Explore potential cluster staffing for: GIS, IT, dairy, etc - Clustering may benefit by reducing redundancy and improving budgets through cooperation.

Shorelines and Riparian Habitat

KCD will increase the acres and miles of enhanced freshwater and marine riparian habitat on private property engaging more landowners and residents through increased levels of education and technical services and financial incentives. It will use convene and use an Initiative Review Team to evaluate and identify projects for funding. The objective is to implement urban shoreline and riparian habitat improvement projects consistent with current program procedures during CY 2015, and continue this practice in CY 2016 unless an alternate framework is recommended and adopted. The recommendations of the Initiative Review Team/Work Group will be reported to the full Advisory Committee for concurrence and the KCD Board for approval.

Fostering Collaboration to Build Capacity within the Community of the Multiple Partners and Stakeholders of King Conservation District

Increase Community Engagement through new media/networking/etc - To be an effective advocate for farms KCD will broaden its connection with the community.

Promote the term "farmland" in the primary lexicon - As a keystone to resource preservation, the term "farmland" needs to become ubiquitous when speaking about economics, the environment, or the creation of government policy.

Expand and support efforts of PSCD caucus to increase capacity of its members - Partnerships and collaboration offer greater synergy.

Advisory Committee Outreach - Provide communication and organizational understanding between KCD and stakeholders.

Increase Diversity. Cultural, geographic, and ethnic diversity enhances KCD's viewpoint and contribution.

Strengthen tribal relations and foster opportunities with additional tribes - The tribes present an important component and viewpoint for KCD.

Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) - KCD will increase our region's capacity to protect and enhance natural resources by providing financial incentives complementary to our technical programs and services that support private landowners in meeting the region's expectations that common natural resources be protected and enhanced for the public benefit.

Goals	Statement of Intent	2-Year Objectives	5-Year Objectives
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<p>PRIORITY 1:</p> <p>RURAL AND URBAN FORESTRY</p> <p>Rural Forestry: The King Conservation District will work with small-lot forest landowners across unincorporated King County to increase the resilience of the forested landscape and capture the ecological, recreational and other values of forests by helping landowners actively manage forestlands and open space areas.</p>	<p>KCD will expand its efforts by enhancing its partnerships with King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Washington State University Cooperative Extension, and rural residential and small private forest landowners to protect and enhance woodlots and smaller stands of forest, reduce forest fragmentation, and capture the ecological benefits and in some cases the economic value of forests.</p>	<p>Develop and deploy new expanded approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase from current level of 25 - 40 acres to 225 acres of rural forest / woodlot treated and planted annually, a total of 1,125 acres over 5 years • Increase from 2,000 - 3,000 to 18,000 - 36,000 native trees and shrubs planted on forest land annually, a total of 90,000 to 180,000 over 5 years • Increase from \$28,986 to \$144,900 of private sector funding leveraged on forest health management annually, a total of \$724,500 over 5 years • Increase from 2-3 to 18 or more small forest landowners engaged annually in planning and implementing best management practices through KCD technical services, a total of at least 90 landowners engaged over 5 years. • Offer 1 or more WSU Coached Forest Stewardship Workshop held in King County annually or at least 5 workshops in 5 years. • Increase from \$38,750 to \$150,000 in KCD LIP cost-share funding awarded annually for contracts with small private forest landowners to implemented best management practices, for a total of \$750,000 in cost share monies awarded over 5 years.
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<p>Urban Forestry: KCD will expand conservation of urban tree canopies and grow green infrastructure where it is deemed most needed through partnerships with our member jurisdictions and their respective neighborhood and community organizations, groups and landowners</p>	<p>King Conservation District will work with our member jurisdictions and other partners to build a program that increases street trees and urban tree canopy coverage and builds green infrastructure in communities across King County. We will build on existing programs and utilize other available resources when available.</p>	<p>Develop and deploy new expanded approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase from 6 to 14 acres of urban forest/upland treated and planted annually, a total of 70 urban acres over 5 years. • Increase from 14,500 to 34,400 native trees and shrubs planted on urban forest/upland habitat annually, a total of 172,000 trees and shrubs planted in urban areas over 5 years. • Increase from \$144,000 to \$324,400 private sector funding leveraged on urban forest/upland health annually, a total of \$1,622,000 of private sector funds over 5 years. • 3 jurisdiction roundtables facilitated annually to develop tailored urban forest retention and restoration initiatives, reaching 15 King County cities in 5 years. • Work with 3 new jurisdictions annually in a support and/or coordination role to plan and implement urban forest retention and restoration programs, building urban canopy programs in 15 King County cities within 5 years. • Increase from \$14,000 to \$150,000 (\$50,000 per jurisdiction) KCD LIP cost-share funds awarded annually for contracts with urban residents and neighborhood and community groups to implement management practices consistent with the urban forest initiatives adopted by the respective jurisdictions, for a total of \$750,000 in cost-share monies awarded over 5 years.

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<p>PRIORITY 2:</p> <p>FOOD AND FARMING</p> <p>Sustainable, Equitable, and Resilient Regional Food System: King Conservation District proposes to help address these challenges by working with our partners and technical experts to develop a regional grant program designed to build capacity in food production, transportation, storage, distribution, and access.</p>	<p>KCD will seek to align with established regional food system recommendations from the King County Local Food Initiative’s Kitchen Cabinet, the Farms and Food Roundtable, and Puget Sound Regional Council’s Food Policy Council. These funds will be used to leverage other resources, such as USDA, EPA, and state sources, whenever possible to ensure significant on-the-ground impact over the next five years.</p>	<p>Develop and deploy new expanded approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving food access • Investing in local food system as an economic growth sector • Beginning to address storage and processing obstacles • Strengthening direct market connections at farmers markets • Expanding CSAs • KCD will bring over \$5,000,000 to the expansion and stabilization of a sustainable, equitable, and resilient regional food economy over the next 5 years. These funds can be used as match for USDA and other grant sources for even greater impact on the development of our food system economy.

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<p>Urban Agriculture: KCD will build on existing success, such as Seattle Tilth’s Farm Works in Auburn and Rainier Beach Urban Farm and Wetlands in south Seattle as models of success and work together to innovate new pilot programs to learn from and adapt.</p>	<p>KCD will work with our member jurisdictions, King County, Seattle Tilth, Cascade Harvest Coalition, Pike Place Market, the Puget Sound Regional Food Council, and others across the food system spectrum to identify strategies to develop urban agricultural opportunities.</p>	<p>Develop and deploy new expanded approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess regional need for urban farming-related natural resource planning support through coordination with member jurisdictions and the KCD Advisory Committee. • Continue to market and expand soil fertility services to promote responsible fertilizer practices (Increase gardener involvement by at least 100 more new gardeners annually, engaging at least 500 new gardeners over 5 years). In 2014, the goal is to serve 200 gardeners/ farmers with the soil testing service. • Grow current soil testing program and customers into a more comprehensive urban conservation program focused on growing healthy local food and protecting and enhancing urban water quality. • Assist up to 15 jurisdictions with Comprehensive Code and Regulatory Code audits over 5 years. • Increase from under 5 to 20 Urban Farm Planning Technical Assists per year. Our goal is to assist urban farming planning across the District that by year 5, a total of 100 urban farms have received planning technical assistance across King County.

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<p>Rural Agriculture: King Conservation District will increase its support of rural farmers through both increasing the number of plans to self-selected clients as well as expand current pilot efforts on sub-basin targeting to improve water, soil, and habitat quality in watersheds that exhibit poor benchmarks.</p>	<p>KCD will Develop a multi-year plan to deploy targeted farm planning services approach county wide to key targeted natural resource concern areas for example PIC approach-targeting water quality impaired sub-basins with significant commercial farming land use (5 - 10 watersheds prioritized; may result in 10+ year plan).</p>	<p>Develop and deploy new expanded approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain 2014 level of county-wide farm natural resource planning support. This program currently addresses water quality, salmon habitat, and farm productivity goals. • 150 farming service customers/70 farm conservation plans, including 2 dairy nutrient management plans/ Follow up on 150 farm plans /Loan Manure Spreader to 30 landowners/Loan hay probe to 20 farmers for feed nutrient management/Loan lime spreader to 25 landowners for soil fertility management • Develop a multi-year plan to deploy targeted farm planning services county-wide. Establish a regionally coordinated outreach/service delivery program. Target 1 natural resource concern area for outreach each 2 years. (This program was in BETA in 2014, funded by outside grants) • Serve 50 farming customers in targeted natural resource areas annually, reaching 250 farmers over 5 years. (in addition to 2014 levels above) • Delivering 20 farm plans in targeted natural resource areas (25% regulatory nexus; 10% Current/PBRS nexus: 65% stewardship nexus only) annually, totaling 100 over a 5 year period. (in addition to 2014 levels above) • Connect land managers and farmers with financial assistance to make identified improvements.
<p>9</p>	<p>King Conservation District Strategic Plan 2015 - 2020</p>		

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Explore county-wide farm production strategic plan.	Production and preservation can be more effective when partners participate in the planning process.	1. Scope out the funding, partnership and timing for a county-wide strategic plan.	Maintain and update list of partners and opportunities for collaboration in planning.
Raise literacy of policymakers and stakeholders of the value of and critical need to protect and expand farmland	Work with farming community to publish white paper articulating the intrinsic value of farmland and challenges facing farmers today and in the future.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Convene a policy subcommittee with the Board/staff/FFF/Ag. 2. Commission Subcommittee will develop policy for Board adoption. 	<p>Foster greater communication between partners.</p> <p>Review adopted policy annually.</p>

Goals	Statement of Intent	2-Year Objectives	5-Year Objectives
<p>PRIORITY 3:</p> <p>SHORELINES AND RIPARIAN HABITAT</p> <p>KCD will increase the acres and miles of enhanced freshwater and marine riparian habitat on private property engaging more landowners and residents through increased levels of education and technical services and financial incentives.</p>	<p>KCD will work with our member jurisdictions and other local and regional to build a program that increases the acres and miles of enhanced freshwater and marine shoreline on private lands through workshops, one-on-one education, and technical and financial assistance for implementing best management practices.</p>	<p>Develop and deploy new expanded approach.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase to 3.6 miles of shoreline replanted and enhanced annually, totaling 18 miles of shoreline over 5 years • Increase to 47 acres of riparian corridor replanted and enhanced annually, for a total of 235 acres of riparian corridor over 5 years • Increase to 115,100 native trees and shrubs planted annually, totaling 575,500 over 5 years • Increase to a minimum of 220 freshwater aquatic area landowners engaged annually in learning about, planning and implementing practices, engaging 1,100 freshwater landowners over 5 years • Increase to a minimum of 120 marine shoreline aquatic area landowners engaged annually in learning about, planning and implementing practices, engaging 600 marine landowners over 5 years • Increase to 20 freshwater aquatic area planting and enhancement projects by KCD, restoring a minimum of 5 acres and 1.8 miles per year on a combination of neighborhood and rural residential lands, a total of at least 25 acres and 9 miles planted and enhanced over 5 years • Increase to 8 CREP projects per year, restoring a minimum of 6 acres and 1.5 miles per year on agricultural lands, for a total of 30 acres and 7.5 miles of agricultural lands restored over 5 years • Increase to \$112,500 KCD LIP cost-share funds awarded annually for contracts with freshwater and marine aquatic area landowners to implement freshwater and marine shoreline planting and enhancement practices in neighborhoods and rural areas, for a total of \$562,500 of cost-share monies awarded over 5 years

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<p>Landowner Incentive Program (LIP): The LIP program supports KCD's other programs.</p>	<p>KCD will increase our region's capacity to protect and enhance natural resources by providing financial incentive complementary to our technical programs and services that support private landowners in meeting the region's expectations that common resources, such as water quality and fish and wildlife habitat be protected and enhanced for the public benefit.</p>	<p>Develop and deploy new expanded approach.</p>	<p>Refer to the performance measures for Rural Forestry, Urban Forestry, Rural Agriculture, Urban Agriculture, Shoreline and Riparian Habitat</p> <p>KCD will award \$656,000 in cost-share funding annually for a total of 3,280,000 in cost-share funding to support Best Management Practices on private property.</p>
<p>PRIORITY 4:</p> <p>FOSTERING COLLABORATION TO BUILD CAPACITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF THE MULTIPLE PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS OF KCD</p>	<p>To be an effective advocate for farms KCD will need to broaden its connection with the community.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify/prioritize which community to engage. 2. Associate targeted communities with appropriate means of engagement. 3. Execute engagement plan. 	<p>Create and execute an engagement plan.</p> <p>Continue to add communities and identify a means of engagement</p> <p>Continue and refine engagement plan.</p>

Goals	Statement of Intent	2-Year Objectives	5-Year Objectives
As farmland protects core natural resources, we need to promote it in the primary lexicon.	As a keystone to resource preservation, the term "farmland" needs to become ubiquitous when speaking about economics, the environment, or the creation of government policy.	1. Create a "White Paper."	Success will look like the acceptance of the term, "farmland" as a primary resource.
Expand and support the efforts of PSCD caucus to increase the capacity of its members and its profile in the region.	Partnerships and collaboration create greater synergy.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Articulate KCD contributions to date 2. Coordinate regional programs and services portfolio project 3. Participate in the development of an outreach and marketing plan 	Within an expanded timeline the PSCD will run as a more cohesive unit, better able to assist caucus members with resource management priorities and capacity issues.
Engage in state-wide professional development.	Educational opportunities and certificates better enable staff to function and provide for clients.	1. Participate in riparian/dairy professional certification.	Ongoing professional programs will be explored

Goals	Statement of Intent	2-Year Objectives	5-Year Objectives
Explore potential cluster staffing for: GIS, IT, Dairy etc.	Clustering may benefit by reducing redundancy and improving budgets through cooperation.	1. Pilot dairy cluster discussion	Should discussion move toward clustering we can expect a broader sharing of resources and improved effectiveness.
Advisory Committee Outreach	Provide better communication and organizational understanding between KCD and stakeholders.	1. Develop AC job descriptions for the next 24 months	Advisory Committee should be a valued member stakeholder; seats are sought after by high-quality stakeholders and provide meaningful guidance to Board.
Diversity	Culturally, geographically, and ethnically enhances KCD viewpoint and contribution.	1. Assess/audit who is missing.	Increase in the diversity of the Board/staff and stakeholders.
Strengthen existing tribal relations and foster opportunities with additional tribes.	The tribes present an important component and viewpoint for KCD.	Partner with Muckleshoot Tribe for targeted farm services on Enumclaw plateau.	Greater participation from various tribes in King County.