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STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

October 22, 2007

**Topic #4: WWRP Farmland Preservation Grants and
Planning Assistance Grants**

Prepared and Presented By: Marguerite Austin

Approved by the Director: 

Proposed Action: Decision

Summary

Sixteen Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) projects requesting \$6.9 million were evaluated and ranked by the Recreation and Conservation Office's FPP Advisory Committee. In addition, the Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation evaluated and ranked 13 applications for planning assistance grants requesting a total of \$322,979. The results of the evaluations are presented, along with staff's funding recommendation.

Farmland Preservation Acquisition Grants

Staff Recommendation for Acquisition Grants

After reviewing the results of the scoring and ranking of farmland preservation projects, and considering comments from evaluators and applicants, staff recommends approval of the ranked list of projects as shown in Table 1. Staff also recommends that this entire list of projects be forwarded to the Governor for submission to the 2008 Legislature for final approval.

Resolution #2007-21 is provided for Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) consideration.

Background

The primary focus of the Farmland Preservation category is to acquire development rights on farmland in Washington and ensure the land remains available for agricultural practices. A secondary goal is to enhance or restore ecological functions on farmland.



To be eligible for consideration in this category, a project must include acquisition of a property interest. Other factors related to this category are:

- Acquisition and restoration projects are eligible.
- Enhancement or restoration activities are limited to less than 50% of the acquisition cost of the project.
- Public access to farmland is not required.
- Cities and counties may apply for funding.
- Applicants must provide at least 50% matching share.
- Applicants may request a maximum of \$750,000.

The Farmland Preservation Account received \$8.7 million in the 2007-09 Capital Budget. The first grant cycle was held in 2006, when ten projects requesting \$4.4 million were evaluated, ranked, approved by the 2007 Legislature, and funded by the RCFB. This left an unspent balance of \$4.3 million that the Board set aside for a 2007 grant round. Currently, with the addition of some "returned" funds, there is \$4,853,343 available.

Using criteria adopted by the RCFB, the Farmland Preservation Advisory Committee reviewed and ranked the farmland preservation projects on October 4 and 5. The committee, comprised of farmers and other individuals recognized for their expertise, experience, and knowledge related to real estate, land management and agricultural production consisted of:

EVALUATOR		DISCIPLINE
Tom Woodruff	Olympia	Real Estate Coordinator, Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Don Stuart	Seattle	Regional Director, American Farmland Trust
Bill J. Druffel	Colton	Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, Whitman County
Mary Embleton	Seattle	Executive Director, Cascade Harvest Coalition
Julie Haakenson	Tacoma	Farmer (organic fruits/vegetables), Jubilee Farm
Cindy Ray	Soap Lake	Farmer (dry land crops)
Terry Willis	Montesano	Farmer (dairy and corn)

The results of the evaluations, provided for RCFB consideration, are found in *Table 1 – WWRP, Farmland Preservation Ranked List of Projects, State Fiscal Year 2009.*

Next Steps

Upon RCFB approval, the ranked list of projects will be forward to the Governor for submission to the Legislature for approval in the 2008 session. If the Legislature approves the list of projects, they will be brought back to the RCFB for final funding approval.

Farmland Preservation Planning Assistance Grants

Background

The 2007 Legislature gave the RCFB authority to use a portion of FPP funds for one-time grants of up to \$25,000 to counties to assist with development of a county farmland preservation strategy. The RCFB authorized the RCO to enter into an agreement with the Conservation Commission's new Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP) to administer this program. RCO and OFP staff jointly developed an announcement soliciting grant applications and established the criteria that would be used in evaluating the applications (see attachment).

The OFP evaluated 13 proposals and submitted the ranked list of projects to the RCFB for funding consideration (Table 2). The OFP grouped the ranked list into three tiers, with Tier I (five projects) being the highest priority, Tier II (six projects) medium priority, and Tier III (two projects) lower priority.

Staff Recommendation for Planning Assistance Grants

Staff reviewed the OFP evaluation process and resulting ranked list of planning assistance projects and available funding and recommends that the RCFB approve for funding projects A-E in Tier I and projects A-C in Tier II.

Resolution #2007-21 includes these grants and is provided for the Board's consideration.

Attachments

- Resolution #2007-21
- Table 1: *WWRP Farmland Preservation Ranked List of Acquisition Projects, State Fiscal Year 2009*
- Farmland Preservation Evaluation Criteria Summary
- Farmland Preservation Project Evaluation Scoring Summary
- Farmland Preservation Project Synopses
- Conservation Commission's Request for Applications and Evaluation Criteria
- Table 2: *WWRP Farmland Preservation Ranked List of Planning Assistance Projects*
- Conservation Commission's Summary of Planning Assistance Projects

RESOLUTION #2007-21
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
Farmland Preservation Ranked List of Projects for Fiscal Year 2009 and
Planning Assistance Grants

WHEREAS, the 2007 Legislature authorized the RCFB to conduct a second 2007-09 Farmland Preservation Account grant cycle, and

WHEREAS, sixteen Farmland Preservation projects were evaluated and ranked in an open public meeting using evaluation criteria approved by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, and

WHEREAS, all sixteen Farmland Preservation category projects meet program requirements as stipulated in RCFB Manual #10f, *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program – Farmland Preservation Program: Policies and Project Selection*, and

WHEREAS, the 2007 Legislature also authorized the RCFB to provide one-time grants of up to \$25,000 to counties to assist in the development of county farmland preservation strategies, and

WHEREAS, the Office of Farmland Preservation has provided a ranked list of eligible projects for RCFB funding consideration;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the RCFB hereby approves the ranked list of projects depicted in Table 1: *WWRP Farmland Preservation Ranked List of Projects*, State Fiscal Year 2009, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the RCFB hereby recommends to the Governor the ranked list of Farmland Preservation category projects be submitted to the 2008 Legislature for approval, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the RCFB hereby approves funding for the planning assistance grants in Tier 1 (A-E) and Tier 2 (A-C) in Table 2, including \$115,916 from the Farmland Preservation Account grant funds and \$82,063 in Farmland Preservation Account administrative funds for these projects, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the RCFB authorizes the Director to execute the appropriate agreements for implementation of these projects.

Resolution moved by: _____

Resolution seconded by: _____

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: November 1, 2007

Table 1
WWRP Farmland Preservation Evaluation Ranked List
State Fiscal Year 2009

Rank	Score	Number	Project Name	Project Sponsor	RCFB Grant Request	Sponsor Match	Total Cumulative Request Amount	RCO Staff Recommends
1 of 16	111.857	07-1611A	Peoples Ranch	Snohomish County of	\$750,000	\$884,420	\$1,634,420	\$750,000
2 of 16	110.857	07-1540C	Glendale Farm	Jefferson County of	\$546,737	\$546,738	\$1,093,475	\$546,737
3 of 16	110.286	07-1600A	Ebey's Reserve Farmland - Engle	Island County of	\$750,000	\$900,200	\$1,650,200	\$750,000
4 of 16	109.429	07-1604A	Terry's Berries Farm	Pierce County of	\$291,370	\$291,371	\$582,741	\$291,370
5 of 16	109.000	07-1597A	Orting Valley Farms	Pierce County of	\$750,000	\$800,000	\$1,550,000	\$750,000
6 of 16	108.571	07-1610A	Willie Greens Organic Farm	Snohomish County of	\$78,210	\$78,210	\$156,420	\$78,210
7 of 16	107.429	07-1574A	Rattlesnake Hills Working Rangelands	Yakima County of	\$576,650	\$576,650	\$1,153,300	\$576,650
8 of 16	105.286	07-1584A	Useless Bay East Farmland	Island County of	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$500,000
9 of 16	105.000	07-1571A	Crown-S Ranch Farmland	Okanogan County of	\$213,750	\$213,750	\$427,500	\$213,750
10 of 16	102.143	07-1607A	Biderbost Farm	Snohomish County of	\$280,710	\$280,710	\$561,420	\$280,710
11 of 16	102.000	07-1602A	Triple Creek Ranch	Kittitas County of	\$689,695	\$1,073,705	\$1,763,400	Alternate
12 of 16	101.571	07-1556A	Enumclaw Plateau Pasture Land	King County of	\$102,900	\$102,900	\$205,800	Alternate
13 of 16	101.000	07-1616A	Pearson Eddy	Snohomish County of	\$203,420	\$203,420	\$406,840	Alternate
14 of 16	100.857	07-1596A	Cowiche Basin Working Rangelands - Phase 1	Yakima County of	\$690,900	\$690,900	\$1,381,800	Alternate
15 of 16	99.000	07-1603A	Finn Hall Farm Phase 1	Clallam County of	\$508,475	\$508,475	\$1,016,950	Alternate
16 of 16	95.286	07-1612A	Setzer Farm	Snohomish County of	\$20,210	\$20,210	\$40,420	Alternate
					\$6,953,027	\$7,671,659	\$14,624,686	\$4,737,427

WWRP Farmland Preservation funds available \$4,853,343
RCO Staff recommends that \$4,737,427 be used for FPP grants, with the remaining \$115, 916 for Farmland Preservation Technical Assistance Grants

Farmland Preservation Program Evaluation Criteria Summary Table

Criteria	Points
<p>Agricultural Values</p> <p>Importance: Soil types; suitability for producing agricultural products; size; economic productivity; fit of the project to local priorities</p> <p>Viability: On-site production and support facilities; farm to market access; proximity to roads and utilities; water availability; drainage; presence of other features that could hinder or restrict use for agriculture; zoning; likelihood that the farm will remain in agriculture; likelihood that the region will continue to support agriculture</p>	68
<p>Environmental Values (Acquisition only projects)</p> <p>Recommended as part of a plan or strategy; benefits to salmonids, migratory birds, other fish and wildlife habitat; integration with recovery efforts for endangered, threatened, or sensitive species; existing or proposed environmental management/stewardship plan</p>	22
OR	
<p>Environmental Values (Combination acquisition and restoration projects)</p> <p>Enhancement or restoration projects must further ecological functions: Consider the benefits to fish and wildlife species, especially endangered, threatened or sensitive species; benefits to habitat forming processes</p> <p>Consider the likelihood that the anticipated benefits will be realized: Project is based on accepted methods; project is likely to achieve the anticipated benefits</p> <p>Recommended as part of a plan or strategy</p>	22
<p>Community Values and Priorities</p> <p>Community support for the project; consistency with a local land use or a regional or statewide recreational or resource plan</p> <p>Other community values: Viewshed; aquifer recharge; occasional or periodic collector for storm water runoff; floods; agricultural sector job creation; educational and curriculum potential; historic value; buffer to public lands</p>	8
<p>Other</p> <p>Urgency Term; cost benefit; local match; sponsor's ability to acquire, manage, monitor, and enforce conservation easements; demonstration</p>	27
Total points available	125



Recreation and
Conservation
Funding Board

**Evaluation Scoring Summary
WWRP Farmland Preservation
State Fiscal Year 2009**

Rank	Name/Sponsor	Agricultural Values 1	Environmental Values 2	Community Values 3	Other 4	Total Points
1	Peoples Ranchi/Snohomish County	58.429	20.143	8.000	25.286	111.857
2	Glendale Farm/Jefferson County	61.143	18.143	7.857	23.714	110.857
3	Ebey's Reserve /Island County	60.000	17.286	7.714	25.286	110.286
4	Terry's Berries/Pierce County	61.143	15.857	7.857	24.571	109.429
5	Orting Valley F/Pierce County	58.143	19.286	7.429	24.143	109.000
6	Willie Greens O/Snohomish County	58.857	19.000	7.714	23.000	108.571
7	Rattlesnake Hill/Yakima County	55.286	20.429	7.857	23.857	107.429
8	Useless Bay Eas/Island County	55.143	17.857	7.714	24.571	105.286
9	Crown-S Ranch F/Okanogan County	54.000	18.000	8.000	25.000	105.000
10	Biderbost Farm/Snohomish County	57.286	13.857	7.000	24.000	102.143
11	Triple Creek Ra/Kittitas County	54.286	15.429	7.571	24.714	102.000
12	Enumclaw Plateau/King County	55.000	15.714	7.571	23.286	101.571
13	Pearson Eddy/Snohomish County	51.286	18.714	7.571	23.429	101.000
14	Cowiche Basin W/Yakima County	50.857	19.000	7.714	23.286	100.857
15	Finn Hall Farm /Clallam County	54.286	14.000	7.286	23.429	99.000
16	Setzer Farm/Snohomish County	48.429	16.857	7.000	23.000	95.286

Evaluation Team Scores Questions: 1-4

WWRP
FARMLAND PRESERVATION ACCOUNT

FARMLAND
PRESERVATION

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2009

Project Synopses

Grant Request

1. Snohomish County

\$750,000

Protecting Peoples Ranch

Snohomish County will use this grant to buy development rights on 240 acres of regionally significant Peoples Ranch in the Tualco Valley, a historically farmed area that is experiencing increased development pressure. Peoples Ranch is the center of operations for the Hollandia Dairy Farm, which was established in 1990. The dairy milks 500 cows, grows and harvests 130 acres of green chop and raises milk and heifer cattle. Peoples Ranch is 5 miles south of Monroe and abuts a continuous block of protected farmland totaling 845 acres. The soils on the farm are classified as prime farmland soils. The dairy is actively restoring riparian areas and has enrolled 28 acres of land in a federal conservation program. The Hollandia Dairy Farm's extensive infrastructure, proximity to major markets and commitment to best management practices make the farm a vital component of the local dairy industry. Snohomish County will contribute \$884,420 in conservation futures and a federal grant. (07-1611A)

2. Jefferson County

\$546,737

Protecting Glendale Farm

Jefferson County, in partnership with the Jefferson Land Trust, will use this grant to acquire a conservation easement on the 180-acre Glendale Farm, just south of Chimacum. Glendale Farm is one of the largest parcels in the county still in active agricultural use. It is at the confluence of Beaver and Center Valleys, the two largest agriculturally zoned areas in the county. The land has been a farm since 1857, with a history of dairy and cheese production, and is currently an organic beef operation. Zoning allows for up to 12 additional houses on the property, and nearby farms are being subdivided for residential use. Restoration efforts include installation of a solar system and increased efficiency of the irrigation system. Better efficiency will improve the carrying capacity of the farm and increase the diversity of production. The farm includes 150 acres of prime soils, 23 acres of forest, more than a 1/2 mile of Chimacum Creek, scenic vistas from two rural arterials and habitat for salmon, trumpeter swans, eagles, hawks and many other animals. The highly visible, scenic vistas of this farm define the rural character of east Jefferson County, and protection of the strategically located property will set the tone for the viability of the county's agricultural community. Jefferson County and Land Trust will co-hold the easement. Jefferson County will contribute \$546,738 from a federal grant and conservation futures. (07-1540C)

Grant Request

3. Island County

\$750,000

Preserving Ebey's Reserve Farmland

Island County and the land trust will use this grant to buy and co-hold a conservation easement on 83 acres of prime farmland actively farmed for more than 155 years and highly productive for a wide variety of crops. Located in Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve on Whidbey Island, the farmland lies on the south boundary of the historic town of Coupeville, the second oldest town in Washington, and provides the historic agricultural context for both the town and reserve. Acquisition will protect one of the most productive and fertile agricultural properties in Island County and help ensure the future viability of agriculture in Ebey's Reserve. The property is an unprotected "hole" in the prairie, and thus is an exceedingly critical connection between a major farm and hundreds of acres of farmland protected by conservation easements held by the National Park Service. The land is highly sought for residential development because of its location adjacent to Coupeville with sweeping views of Admiralty Inlet, the Olympic Mountains and Ebey's Reserve farmlands that are permanently protected by conservation easements. The owners receive countless purchase offers, posing a real and imminent threat. The county will contribute \$900,200 from a federal grant and conservation futures. (07-1600A)

4. Pierce County

\$291,370

Preserving Terry's Berries Farm

Pierce County will use this grant to buy the development rights on the 21-acre Terry's Berries Farm, between east Tacoma and Puyallup. By removing the development rights and reducing the real estate value of the farm, the heirs will be able to afford to compensate each other for its fair market value, thus reducing the likelihood of the need to sell to developers. The farm rests on some of the most productive soils west of the Cascade Mountains, surrounded by other agricultural uses. Its proximity to the urban fringe makes it a strategic location for development. More than 2,000 school children tour the farm every year. Allowing children and families an opportunity to understand how food is grown is integral to promoting conservation and supporting local farming as a valued profession and community need. Pierce County will contribute \$291,371 in conservation futures. (07-1604A)

Grant Request

- 5. Pierce County** **\$750,000**
Protecting Orting Valley Farms
Pierce County will use this grant to buy conservation easements that remove development rights and allow five farmers to purchase a portion of the Orting Valley Farms and establish working farms. The Orting Valley Farms is a partnership between Pierce Co., PCC Farmland Trust and private organic farmers to preserve a productive 100-acre farm. The Puyallup River Valley, and this farm in particular, are facing increasing pressure to develop. Located on the Puyallup River and in agricultural production since the late 1800s, the farm has highly productive, prime agricultural soils, excellent farm-to-market access, water rights, irrigation systems and infrastructure. The property is priority habitat for White River elk, includes Copeland Creek and is in an open space corridor between Mount Rainier National Park and Commencement Bay. Pierce Co. will contribute \$800,000 in cash, conservation futures, and a donation of \$25,000 from the PCC Farmland Trust. (07-1597A)
- 6. Snohomish County** **\$78,210**
Protecting Willie Greens Organic Farm
Snohomish County will use this grant to purchase development rights on 42 acres of the regionally important Willie Greens Organic Farm. Willie Greens grows more than 50 varieties of organic fruits, vegetables and berries. The farm is less than 2 miles south of Monroe and adjacent to a 63-acre farm that is protected by an easement. The soils on the farm are classified as prime farmland soils. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service recently selected Willie Greens for preservation. Willie Greens' commitment to sustainable farming practices, combined with the farm's highly productive soils, proximity to major markets, and extensive infrastructure make the farm a valuable component of Snohomish County's agricultural economy. Snohomish County will contribute \$78,210 from a federal grant. (07-1610A)
- 7. Yakima County** **\$576,650**
Preserving Rattlesnake Hills Working Rangelands
Yakima County will use this grant to buy development rights on 1,229 acres of grazing land in the rapidly developing Rattlesnake Hills. The landowner is seeking a conservation easement to counter offers from a developer looking to build a winery and golf course resort. Nearly half of the property is ranked as farmland of statewide importance with the remaining acres valued for livestock forage. The property is in a key habitat corridor that connects the last remaining large shrub steppe properties in Washington. Greater sage-grouse, jackrabbits, Ferruginous hawks and other animals will benefit by protecting this property from development. The landowner wishes to permit public access to the property, allowing people to observe working rangelands, Mount Adams and Mount Rainier. Yakima County will contribute \$576,650 from a federal grant. (07-1574A)

Grant Request

8. Island County

\$500,000

Protecting Useless Bay East Farmland

Island County will use this grant to buy an agricultural conservation easement on about 55 acres of productive farmland in the Useless Bay watershed on Whidbey Island. The land has been used for agricultural purposes since 1915, including both crops and pasture. Adjacent to about 500 acres of protected wetlands at Deer Lagoon, the farm's agricultural fields, wetlands and riparian areas are used by wild-life and are a critical ecological element within the watershed. The property, which is at immediate risk of development to pay debts, is valued for homes because of its views of wetlands, Useless Bay and the Olympic Mountains as well as its proximity to recreational lands. If a conservation easement is not acquired, the property will be sold and developed into up to six homes. The easement will extinguish all but one development right ensuring that the farmland remains available for both agricultural and wildlife uses. Island County and Whidbey Camano Land Trust will co-hold the easement. Island County will contribute \$500,000 in conservation futures. (07-1584A)

9. Okanogan County

\$213,750

Preserving Crown-S Ranch Farmland

Okanogan County, in partnership with the Methow Conservancy, will use this grant to protect 49.57 acres of farmland in the Methow Valley through a permanent conservation easement. The Crown S Ranch is 2 miles south of Winthrop and is certified organic. The conservation easement will prevent subdivision, limit residential development and prevent loss of prime farmland while supporting the agricultural economy of the county. Because the property has easy access to Highway 20, mountain views, privacy and flat ground, it is desirable for a housing development. Without the easement, the farm likely would be divided into up to ten home sites. The easement provides a connection between four existing conservation easements in the Winthrop-Twisp farm corridor. The Methow Conservancy has been working to protect farmland in this priority area since 1998 and to date holds easements on 1,868 acres. Okanogan Co. will contribute \$213,750 from a federal grant. (07-1571A)

10. Snohomish County

\$280,710

Preserving the Biderbost Farm

Snohomish County will use this grant to buy development rights on 59 acres of the Biderbost Farm, which is a half mile south of Monroe and adjacent to 65 acres that will be developed within five years. The farm, established in 1948, is used to provide forage for livestock and has prime agricultural soils. The USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service recently selected the Biderbost Farm for preservation. The Biderbost family has been farming in the Tualco Valley area for 100 years. Its long-term commitment to farming, combined with the farm's highly productive soils, proximity to major markets, water rights and existing infrastructure make the Biderbost farm a valuable component of Snohomish County's agricultural economy. Snohomish County will contribute \$280,710 from a federal grant. (07-1607A)

Grant Request

Alternates

11. Kittitas County **\$689,695**

Triple Creek Ranch

Kittitas County will use this grant to purchase development rights on the 400-acre Triple Creek Ranch. Currently a hay and cattle farm, Triple Creek Ranch also has rich riparian habitat in Upper Wilson Creek, which represents a critical wildlife corridor for the valley. The farm's owners receive near daily requests to purchase their property. Kittitas County will contribute more than \$1 million in cash, a federal grant and donated property interest. (07-1602A)

12. King County **\$102,900**

Enumclaw Plateau Pasture Land

King County will use this grant to purchase the development rights on 31 acres of pastureland to permanently preserve them for farming. The property is part of the largest dairy in King County and is used for corn and silage production. Located in south King County, the farm has prime soils. Although traditionally an agricultural community, the Enumclaw Plateau is becoming a mix of active farms and "scenic" farms. Buying the development rights on this property will add to the operating capital of a working dairy, thereby helping it stay economically viable. In addition to producing income, the dairy helps support businesses that provide services to the area's agricultural industry. Active agriculture requires support services as well as a land base and purchasing the development rights on this property will benefit other farms by helping to keep this infrastructure intact. King County will contribute \$102,900 from a federal grant and voter-approved bonds. (07-1556A)

13. Snohomish County **\$203,420**

Pearson Eddy

Snohomish County will use this grant to buy development rights on 403 acres of Pearson Eddy farm. Pearson Eddy consists of 403 acres of prime farmland owned by the Cascade Land Conservancy and Pacifica Poplars, Inc. About 236 acres are unavailable for farming because they are protected by a federal wetland conservation easement. The county plans to renegotiate this easement so that agricultural activities can be resumed on about 85 percent of the property. The result will be a unique project that balances farmland preservation and habitat restoration objectives on one site. Pearson Eddy is 5 miles south of Monroe and is within a half mile of a continuous block of protected farmland totaling 845 acres. The property has been farmed for over a century, and portions of the land have been selected by the U.S.'s Natural Resources Conservation Service for preservation. Local dairy farmers view Pearson Eddy as a valuable resource, and have expressed a strong desire to see most of the land returned to agricultural production. Snohomish County will contribute \$203,420 from a federal grant. (07-1616A)

Grant Request

14. Yakima County

\$690,900

Cowiche Basin Working Rangelands – Phase 1

Yakima County will use this grant to buy a conservation easement on 2,150 acres of rangeland as part of a larger undertaking to keep 4,600 acres of rangeland pasture intact and undeveloped. South of this property, land has been subdivided into 10- and 40-acre developed parcels. Those areas are now inaccessible for use as working rangelands. To the north, other large rangeland pastures are threatened with development. This project will set an example to encourage local ranchers to develop conservation easements to offset future development and help preserve working rangelands. Yakima County will contribute \$690,900 from federal funds. (07-1596A)

15. Clallam County

\$508,475

Finn Hall Farm Phase 1

Clallam County will use this grant to place a conservation easement on 25 acres of the Finn Hall farm. The farm has three types of prime soil. Currently used to grow hay, local farmers have indicated its value as a site for growing other crops, including brassica seed. Because Clallam and Skagit Counties together are one of only four areas in the world suitable for growing brassica seeds, farmland in the county is important globally. The county will contribute \$508,475 in donations of cash and property interest. (07-1603A)

16. Snohomish County

\$20,210

Setzer Farm

Snohomish County will use this grant to buy development rights on 17 acres of the Setzer farm in the unique and fertile Tualco Valley, a historically farmed area that is experiencing increased development pressure. The Setzer farm was established in the 1940s and is leased by the nearby Werkhoven Dairy for corn silage production. The farm is a half mile south of Monroe and is within 500 feet of a 40-acre farm that is already protected by easement. The soils on the farm are classified as prime farmland soils and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service recently selected the farm for preservation. The Setzer farm is an important resource for the local dairy industry. If the Setzer property remains available for corn silage production, dairy farms will be less dependent on silage from eastern Washington. This will result in lower feed and transportation costs, thereby improving the long-term economic viability of dairy operations in the Tualco Valley. Snohomish County will contribute \$20,210 from a federal grant. (07-1612A)



STATE OF WASHINGTON

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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Farmland Preservation Grants Available to WA Counties

The 2007 Legislature created the new Office of Farmland Preservation within the Conservation Commission.

An important goal of the OFP is to work with existing local farmland preservation programs. However, there are not very many local programs in existence and in some cases the existing programs are not working at a level that they would prefer.

To that end, a limited number of technical assistance grants are available to Washington State counties for the development of farmland preservation programs. The 2007 Legislature provided a one-time opportunity to fund these assistance grants with funds made available through the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) category.

Available through the new Washington State Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP), the grants are intended to assist counties in creating a farmland preservation program or increasing capacity of existing programs. A primary objective of these assistance grants is to help counties develop strategies that could lead to future grant applications seeking state funding for acquisition of agricultural conservation easements.

The technical assistance grants are limited to \$25,000 each, and a total of five such grants may be available this fiscal year. There is no cost-share match requirement; however, applicants providing additional resources will receive extra consideration.

Grants may be used for any stage of development of a county farmland preservation program, ranging from assessing local interest in establishing such a program, to strengthening or improving an existing program. For example, grants may be used to:

- Assess community interest through interviews, surveys, town meetings, or other methods appropriate to your county.
- Develop priorities for farmland to be preserved. This could include identification of priority agricultural activities, soil types, and/or locations.
- Develop a farmland preservation strategy. This could include a strategy for preserving priority farmland through acquisition (fee or less-than-fee), landowner incentives, and voluntary actions.
- Develop a local process for identifying high priority farms to protect with agricultural conservation easements, to submit for farmland preservation grants through the OFP or FPP.

Applications:

Interested counties should submit their applications so that they are received in the Office of Farmland Preservation by noon on October 15th. Applications will consist of a narrative proposal and be evaluated by the Office of Farmland Preservation. The applicant's narrative should discuss:

- The current farmland preservation program in the county if there is one.
- The type of farmland preservation program ultimately envisioned by the county legislative authority.
- The grant amount requested and the activities that would be undertaken with the funding.
- A proposed schedule to start, execute and complete the work.

In addition to the narrative, applicants must submit:

- A transmittal letter signed by a county department head or higher.
- Answers to each of the six evaluation questions below.

Applications will be evaluated based on the material submitted. Submissions are limited to no more than five typewritten pages (may be one or two-sided copies, but no more than five sides total), Use 8-1/2 x 11" paper and 12-point-size standard font (ex: Aerial, Times Roman, etc – but not a condensed type).

Applications will be evaluated based on answers to the following questions:

1. Need. Has the loss of agricultural land in the county has been identified as a major problem? Please explain.
2. Threat. Is a significant loss of agricultural land imminent? Please explain.
3. Importance: Is the county an important producer of crops, commodities, or other agricultural products? Does the county have important soil types or soil types of statewide significance? Please explain.
4. Interest: Is there, or is there believed to be, significant interest in the community to preserve agricultural land? Please explain.
5. Readiness: Is the county ready to undertake the activities proposed in the grant request? Please explain.
6. Cost share: In addition to this grant, is the county (or a participating partner) offering additional resources in the form of cash, employee time, or volunteer time? Please explain.

Successful applicants must submit a final report that captures what was accomplished, and, if applicable, details of further action needed to fully develop a successful program.

Funding for the grants is contingent upon the Office of Farmland Preservation receiving a block grant through the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB). The RCFB administers the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program and will consider funding in early November 2007. Work accomplished through the grants must be completed within 12 months of

grant approval. Grant funds may not be used for non-direct costs, such as office overhead. Funds may be used for direct costs such as staff time, consultant fees and mileage. All project expenses, whether with grant funds, match or donations must fit into one of the following categories:

- Communications: public announcements, for example for public meetings or to solicit comments on issues, options, or specific proposals. Costs could include postage, printing, binding, copying, mailing, and Internet site development.
- Professional Services: planning consultants, opinion surveys, mapping/GIS, web site development, etc.
- Rentals and Leases: equipment rental, meeting rooms.
- Salaries and Benefits: county employees, volunteers (valued at \$13 per hour, unless specific skill is valued higher by Employment Security Department)
- Supplies: forms, maps, stationary; general supplies, publications.
- Transportation/Travel: mileage, per diem, etc.

Applications should be submitted to Steve McGonigal, Manager, Office of Farmland Preservation, P.O. Box 47721, Olympia, WA 98504-7721; (360) 407-7474; smcgonigal@scc.wa.gov. Electronic submissions are preferred.

Table 2
WWRP Farmland Planning Assistance Project Evaluation Ranked List
State Fiscal Year 2009

Rank	Tier	Number	County	RCFB Grant Request	Cumulative Request	RCO Staff Recommends
1 of 13	1	A	Kittitas	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
2 of 13		B	Clark	\$25,000	\$50,000	\$25,000
3 of 13		C	Clallam	\$25,000	\$75,000	\$25,000
4 of 13		D	Jefferson	\$25,000	\$100,000	\$25,000
5 of 13		E	Whatcom	\$22,979	\$122,979	\$22,979
6 of 13	2	A	Thurston	\$25,000	\$147,979	\$25,000
7 of 13		B	San Juan	\$25,000	\$172,979	\$25,000
8 of 13		C	Klickitat	\$25,000	\$197,979	\$25,000
9 of 13		D	Snohomish	\$25,000	\$222,979	Alternate
10 of 13		E	Pierce	\$25,000	\$247,979	Alternate
11 of 13		F	Kitsap	\$25,000	\$272,979	Alternate
12 of 13	3	A	Yakima	\$25,000	\$297,979	Alternate
13 of 13		B	Okanogan	\$25,000	\$322,979	Alternate
				\$322,979		\$197,979

WWRP Farmland Preservation funds available \$115,916; administrative funds available \$82,063



STATE OF WASHINGTON

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

PO Box 47721 • Olympia, Washington 98504-7721 • (360) 407-6200 • FAX (360) 407-6215

To: Recreation & Conservation Office
From: Office of Farmland Preservation, Steve McGonigal
Date: October 19, 2007
Subject: Farmland Preservation Technical Assistance Grants

Below is our prioritized list of applications from counties for technical assistance grants to develop their farmland preservation programs.

Tier I

A. - KITTITAS COUNTY

Summary: *"An important part of the comprehensive agricultural protection plan for Kittitas County will be the identification of Agricultural Production Districts (APDs)." The grant funding will be used to: "Identify and involve key stakeholders, develop outreach materials, create educational materials to explain APDs, distribute draft documents and solicit comments through public meetings, coordinate with key stakeholder groups, create maps detailing APDs, conduct public outreach on final APDs and coordinate and integrate with Kittitas County TDR program and Comprehensive Planning processes."*

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: Application contains no dollar amount or value. *"The county is contributing additional resources to this project in the form of employee time. In addition, Cascade Land Conservancy will have 2 staff people working on the grant."*

B. - CLARK COUNTY

Summary: County would undertake a project to: *"Organize farm preservation advisory committee to assist with development of farm plan; Identify, evaluate and prioritize farm areas/projects (using GMA designations, Conservation Areas Acquisition Plan, and other data sources); Identify and recommend tools and strategies to help preserve farms and support services; Conduct stakeholder interviews to help inform advisory committee; Prepare plan that establishes eligibility for WWRP farm grants and other funding sources"*

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: County will provide administrative support (\$15,000)) GIS mapping services (\$10,000) and printing and binding of report (\$500)

C. - CLALLAM COUNTY

Summary: *"The County intends to use the grant to strengthen and improve its farmland preservation program by enabling the county to 1) contribute toward a survey that will assess community support for funding options, 2) pay for staff to develop a strategy for improving the effectiveness of its current incentive programs, and 3) pay for staff to develop a GIS layer that will assist in prioritizing farmland to be preserved . . ."*

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: County absorbing costs for communications, supplies, transportation, production of brochure, webpage and GIS layer. Other partners: Port Angeles Realtors \$2500; Sequim Realtors \$2500; Friends of the Fields \$1000; North Olympic Land Trust \$100 Trust for Public Land \$8500

D. - JEFFERSON COUNTY

Summary: Grant would support activities of the Jefferson LandWorks Collaborative, including: *"Contract extension for farmer outreach coordinator who works one-on-one with farmers . . . ; hosting for three to four succession planning workshops . . . ; funding for one county staff member to participate in monthly Collaborative meetings."*

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: Proposal does not include a dollar amount or value of match. Proposal does mention in-kind short of: Shorebank Enterprise Cascadia, Jefferson Land Trust, Jefferson County Conservation District, WSU County Extension, Sunfield Farm, Northwest Natural Resources Group, Port Townsend Food Coop, Jefferson County Farmers Market Association.

E. - WHATCOM COUNTY

Summary: Proposal describes a need and plan to gather community input about the performance of the six-year-old Purchase of Development Right (PDR) program, options and opinions about the future direction of that program, and opportunities to merge it with a Transfer of Development rights (TDR) program.

Grant Request: \$22,979

Match: Application does not name a dollar amount of value. Application discusses current staffing funding of County, Land Trust and USDA/NRCS. Application discusses funds raised through conservation futures levy in place since 1992.

Tier II

A. - THURSTON COUNTY

Summary: "Thurston County will contract an independent consultant to develop and write the Working Lands Conservation Plan. The consultant . . . will: Develop and implement a public participation plan; Complete a comprehensive evaluation of strategies that can successfully preserve farmland while maintaining compliance with the agricultural lands provisions under the Washington Grown Management Act; Review and evaluation approaches to integrate implementation tools; and Provide a final Working Lands Conservation Plan to be recommended for adoption by Thurston County."

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: "The county will provide a \$14,480 cost-share through in-kind services provided by planning staff who will oversee the project and coordinate the consultant work. In addition to this, the (10-member) volunteer Agricultural Advisory Committee will work . . ."

B. - SAN JUAN COUNTY

Summary: The proposal would create an "Agricultural conservation easements education campaign. The campaign will consist of four components: media outreach, ag land owner outreach, community outreach, and ag land inventory with associated one-on-on networking."

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: The proposal includes a total budget of \$45,000 and lists \$20,000 of that total as "In-kind support (partner cost share)".

C. - KLICKITAT COUNTY

Summary: "Our project will: Identify the key issues associated with farmland protection/loss faced by our local agriculture community; learn what options, programs, opportunities and models may exist for addressing these issues; describe the issues and relevant program possibilities in the form of a white paper and a PowerPoint presentation; take public input through public meetings. Based on the above research and input, we will design a program for our county."

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: Proposal contains no dollar amount or value. County will contribute in-kind by providing administrative support. "We also anticipate participation, in kind, in the form of volunteer effort by community members . . ."

D. - SNOHOMISH COUNTY

Summary: "In coordination with the County's current farmland preservation program, this grant will fund a 12 month period of outreach and stakeholder input to build support and commitment from cities and developers to participate in an effective TDR program. Outreach over the next 12 months is critical since a Comprehensive Plan Amendment for a county-wide TDR program is on the docket for approval in spring 20008."

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: Proposal shows no dollar amount or value. "Snohomish County will be utilizing in-house public involvement specialists in addition to planning staff to work with the cities and developers that will contribute substantially matching dollars to this effort. It is also envisioned the citizen volunteers on the Planning Commission and the Agricultural Advisory Board will contribute significant time towards the development of the program."

E. - PIERCE COUNTY

Summary: "The ultimate farmland preservation program envisioned by the county will involve a Transfer of Development rights Committee, established to oversee the function and intent of the TDR/PDR program. This grant request would allow the county to hire an outside consultant to assist the county with the initial development of the committee."

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: "The Department of Planning and Land Services will assume the costs of managing a professional services contract with an outside agency hired to fulfill the tasks outlined in this grant request. The department estimates that this will cost up to \$10,000 of staff time and resources."

F. - KITSAP COUNTY

Summary: "...The Kitsap 20-20 Agriculture Task Force would use these grant funds to support three specific tasks: 1) Develop models for farmland preservation in urbanizing areas that may be appropriate in Kitsap County; 2) Identify policy gaps in existing county land use policy and develop policy language to support community-scale agriculture in Kitsap County; 3) Conduct a survey of Kitsap County farm operators. ..."

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: Kitsap County Extension staff time and materials \$10,000; Kitsap Conservation staff time, \$5,000; Volunteer time (200 hrs x \$13/hr. = \$2,600)

Tier III

A. - YAKIMA COUNTY

Summary: *"The non-regulatory program will research, develop, utilize and revise policies, tools and procedures for conservation easement purchases, donation of critical properties and transfer/purchase of development rights."*

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: *"Yakima County can provide staff and office resources." The application lists several governmental and non-governmental entities and states that they "... are willing to provide resources toward a farmland preservation program in Yakima County."*

B. - OKANOGAN COUNTY

Summary: *"Okanogan County intends to use the money to staff an Agricultural Lands Advisory Committee which will be responsible for creating a comprehensive program of identifying and mapping agricultural lands and then creating defensible planning policies and practices geared towards preservation of the critical mass of agricultural lands necessary for a vibrant agricultural economy."*

Grant Request: \$25,000

Match: Application contains no dollar figures. *"The county has dedicated substantial local resources to this project. The bulk of the local money will be expended using county staff to support the process. Thousands of hours of volunteer time in the form of fourteen citizen groups will be dedicated to the process."*