



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
Department of Public Works  
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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Dave Ramsay, City Manager

**From:** Jenny Gaus, Environmental Services Supervisor  
Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director

**Date:** May 22, 2009

**Subject:** Letter of support for Reauthorization of the King Conservation District Assessment

### RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Council authorize the Mayor to sign the attached letter of support for reauthorization of the King Conservation District assessment. The letter is directed to the Public Issues Committee (PIC) of the Suburban Cities Association because the PIC will be commenting on the reauthorization in the near future.

### POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

The King Conservation District is currently largely funded through a \$10 per parcel assessment that is levied against all parcels in participating jurisdictions. This assessment will end on December 31, 2009, unless it is reauthorized by the King County Council. In the past, this money has been allocated to KCD programs as follows:

Per each \$10 collected:

- \$5 Salmon recovery grants to WRIAs 7, 8, and 9
- \$3 King Conservation District programs and operations
- \$2 non-competitive grants to local jurisdictions

KCD money is one of the only stable sources of funding for salmon recovery projects and activities, and is a crucial element in making program on the WRIA 8 Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan. KCD has provided approximately \$1.3 million for salmon recovery in WRIA 8 for each of the last 3 years. In addition, Kirkland has been able to fund a variety of local projects including creation of the 20-Year Forest Restoration Plan, staffing and materials for the Green Kirkland program (i.e. implementation of the 20-Year Forest Restoration Plan) using the approximately \$35,000 per year that accrues to our local non-competitive grant fund. The last reauthorization was for 3 years, and it is anticipated that this reauthorization would also be for a 3-year period.

The specific allocation of funds, and the general program of work is included in an interlocal agreement between the King Conservation District and King County (ILA) that is executed prior to the start of the assessment period.

### BACKGROUND DISCUSSION:

When the KCD assessment was last reauthorized in 2006 for the years 2007-2009, there was significant conflict over the allocation of funds, and over the transparency and accountability of the King Conservation District. The Suburban Cities Association was active in this discussion and their involvement resulted in inclusion of language in the ILA about the role of an Advisory Committee to the King Conservation District Board of Supervisors.

The ILA stated the purpose of the advisory committee was to "assist the District in developing its Program of Work and reviewing the administration and implementation of such Program of Work." The definition of the Advisory Committee went on to state that "the committee shall meet as often as is reasonably necessary to assist the District's development of its Program of Work and to adequately review the administration and implementation of such work Program. The committee will investigate the existence of updated or new relevant best science data or indicators relating to, or affecting, natural resource conservation efforts, and will also identify and make funding recommendations for landowner incentive programs which are consistent with the WRIA-based Salmon Recovery Plans."

The Suburban Cities Association PIC members are concerned that the Advisory Committee has not met consistently, and has not had any substantive input into the program of work. Joan McBride is currently the Suburban Cities Association representative to the Advisory Committee.

The reason for sending the attached letter of support is a concern that reauthorization of the assessment should not be derailed by concerns over the Advisory Committee. Although the role of the Advisory Committee and associated issues are important, loss of KCD funding because of these issues would be a setback for both Kirkland's local programs and for regional salmon recovery.

Attachment A:

Letter of support to Suburban Cities Association for Reauthorization of the King Conservation District Assessment

June 3, 2009

Linda Kochmar, Chair  
Public Issues Committee  
Suburban Cities Association  
6300 Southcenter Blvd #206  
Tukwila, WA 98188

RE: King Conservation District Assessment Reauthorization

Dear Linda:

I write to you on behalf of the Kirkland City Council to express strong support for reauthorization of the King Conservation District Special Assessment. Specifically, Kirkland supports maintaining the current assessment at \$10 per parcel, and supports maintaining the current allocation of the revenue from the assessment as shown below.

Per each \$10 collected:  
\$5 WRIA Salmon Recovery grants  
\$3 District programs and operations  
\$2 non-competitive grants to local cities

Kirkland further supports maintaining this allocation of funds for a 3-year assessment period. Kirkland does not support creation of a flexible allocation scheme for years 2 and 3 as currently proposed by the King Conservation District. Salmon recovery requires a stable and dependable source of funding. Furthermore, cities depend on the non-competitive grant funds, even at times "banking" funds over several years, in order to implement important resource conservation projects and programs.

Kirkland has been the beneficiary of non-competitive grant funds that have helped in development of a 20-year forest restoration plan and plan implementation, among other projects. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, KCD's provision of on-going stable funding has been vital in progressing toward regional salmon recovery. KCD currently provides one of the only secure funding sources for salmon recovery in WRIA 8. Salmon recovery is absolutely crucial in maintaining our regional economy and culture. KCD support of salmon recovery is both appropriate and congruent with the District's mission to "promote sustainable uses of natural resources through responsible stewardship." Although in these trying economic times it is tempting to allocate funds to local, rather than regional, needs, Kirkland supports continuation of regional salmon recovery funding at its current level.

Should you have questions about this letter, please contact Deputy Mayor Joan McBride, or Jenny Gaus, Environmental Services Supervisor, at (425) 587-3850 or [jgaus@ci.kirkland.wa.us](mailto:jgaus@ci.kirkland.wa.us).

Sincerely,  
Kirkland City Council

Jim Lauinger, Mayor

Cc: Daryl Grigsby, Public Works Director  
Jenny Gaus, Environmental Services Supervisor  
Jeffrey Possinger, King Conservation District