Program: Urban Agriculture

Key Policy Question:
Establish processes and criteria for launching urban agriculture program, which includes projects on Soil Fertility, Farm Friendly Cities, and Community Food.

Background

King Conservation District urban agriculture program will bring years of experience working with rural farms and translate it to working with urban farmers and gardeners. The program has three focus areas:

1. Soil Fertility- KCD will help urban farmers and gardeners understand how to manage soil fertility, including soil testing and cover cropping, food cycle, and nature resource cycles through practical workshops, site specific technical expertise, soil testing program, and pilot cover cropping incentives.

2. Farm-friendly cities- KCD will work with cities to review comprehensive plans and local regulations to target changes that help cities make updates to become more urban agriculture friendly. The Regional Food Policy Council published its updated Action Plan in late 2014, which includes a collection of model codes and policies that cities can incorporate to remove barriers to urban agriculture. The Action Plan can be found here: [http://www.psrc.org/assets/11958/food_policy_action_plan_10_2014.pdf](http://www.psrc.org/assets/11958/food_policy_action_plan_10_2014.pdf) KCD will provide plan review support for cities desiring that support.

3. Community Urban Agriculture Projects- KCD will partner with cities and community leaders on opportunistic demonstration projects that support food access.

KCD's guiding principles for directing and leveraging our resources include: strive to fund projects and programs across a geographically diverse landscape * projects are encouraged to address multiple natural resource priorities * projects should seek to align with established regional policy and research and planning processes * projects are encouraged to address economic as well as environmental challenges * projects are encouraged to address equity and social justice directly or indirectly * we strive to coordinate with local jurisdiction conservation programs and initiatives where they exist.
**Recommendation**

**Selection Process:**

- First come, first served/shovel ready
- Merit / Criteria

This program has a combination of both.

**Selection Process:**

1. Soil Fertility Program
   - a) Partner with regional urban gardening experts to develop urban soil fertility curriculum
   - b) Market to cities and urban gardening groups in partnership with SCA
   - c) Work with established urban gardening community leaders to plan events
   - d) Prioritize programs that involve multiple communities/ areas/ gardens
   - e) In year two, prioritize new communities to ensure programs are offered regionally

2. Farm Friendly Cities
   - a) Work with Puget Sound Regional Food Policy Council (PSRFPC)
   - b) Catalog timelines of updates for all
   - c) Outreach to planning department (possibly City Councils) in partnership with PSRFPC

3. Community Urban Agriculture Projects
   - a) As opportunities arise, make sure they meet the high bar to support
   - b) KCD Team has available time (capacity for 1-3 projects per year)
   - c) Emphasis on projects that serve multiple cities
   - d) Addresses food access barriers
   - e) Replicability
   - f) Sustainable after start-up help
   - g) After year one, evaluate geographic impact; prioritize future projects to expand geographic impact overtime

**Assumptions**

**Soil Fertility:**
- First come, first served- meets folks when they are ready to take action
- Higher literacy leads to smarter soil fertility stewards actions
- Soil fertility actions can meet clean water, storm water, and soil health benefits

**Farm Friendly Cities:**
- PSRFPC has been working on this
- Comp Plans and code changes have specific timing
- Capacity to do up to 15 cities per year

**Community Agriculture Projects:**
- Capacity to support up to 3 projects per year
- Regional approach over five year period

**Budget**

*Staff cost estimates from the Implementation Plan associated with meeting performance standards are as follows:*

$191,800
**Program:** Urban Street Trees, Tree Canopy Cover and Green Infrastructure*

**Key Policy Question:**
What process should be used to identify the annual geographic focus of urban street tree, tree canopy cover and green infrastructure program investments?

**Background:**
The current KCD urban forest health management program assists urban landowners with enhancing forest canopy and habitat conditions on private property. Approximately 6 acres of urban forest and upland habitat are enhanced each year on private property through KCD landowner assistance programs.

King Conservation District has prioritized working with our member jurisdictions and other partners to build an urban forest health management program that increases urban street tree and tree canopy coverage and builds green infrastructure in communities across King County.

By 2019, KCD will work to implement or expand urban forest health management program activities within the boundary of 15 separate jurisdictions, and will enhance 70 acres of upland forest and habitat in partnership with landowners, residents and departments within those jurisdictions.

KCD programs traditionally have focused on improving natural resource conditions on private property, and a number of jurisdictions have indicated a desire to focus urban forest health management investments on private parcels contiguous with public lands to improve the success of protection and enhancement activities on public holdings and easements.

* For the purposes of this initiative, Green Infrastructure is the use of vegetation and soils to create healthier urban environments

**Recommendation:**

*KCD’s guiding principles for directing and leveraging our resources include: strive to fund projects and programs across a geographically diverse landscape * projects are encouraged to address multiple natural resource priorities * projects should seek to align with established regional policy and research and planning processes * projects are encouraged to address economic as well as environmental challenges * projects are encouraged to address equity and social justice directly or indirectly * we strive to coordinate with local jurisdiction conservation programs and initiatives where they exist.*
Project Process Overview:

- First come, first served/shovel ready (2015)

Beginning in 2015, KCD will engage stakeholders to establish a process for identifying the annual geographic focus areas of the KCD Urban forest health management program investments. Concurrently, KCD will continue to implement urban landowner Forest Stewardship Plans consistent with current KCD practices until an alternate process for identifying geographic focus areas is established. Additionally, KCD will explore opportunities to implement one or more early-action urban forestry demonstration projects during calendar year 2015.

Selection Process:

1. January 2015 through June 2016: KCD will identify, plan and implement urban forest health management projects consistent with current KCD practices whereby landowners and community groups, in partnership with KCD and/or WSU Cooperative Extension, prepare forest stewardship plans and implement those plans through the KCD LIP.

2. Concurrently, the KCD will convene an Urban Forestry Initiative Review Team. The Team will be comprised of a representative from one large jurisdiction (Bellevue or Seattle), one representative each from 3 SCA member jurisdictions located within the boundary of the KCD, one KCD Board member, one urban forest landowner, and one non-governmental representative each from other entities participating on the KCD AC.
   - The KCD Advisory Committee will appoint jurisdiction, landowner and other entity representatives to Team.
   - Member jurisdiction representatives can be jurisdiction staff (technical or management) or elected officials.
   - The KCD Board representative will be selected by the KCD Board

3. The KCD will pre-screen member jurisdictions to determine readiness to proceed with launching or expanding an urban forestry program. (See section titled Selection Criteria for criteria to determine ready-to-proceed status.)

4. Jurisdictions determined ready-to-proceed will be invited to submit an application through a Request for Proposals process. The KCD will develop an RFP process and associated application in collaboration with the Urban Forestry Initiative Review Team. Applications submitted by interested jurisdictions will be used to rank urban forestry program proposals.

5. The Urban Forestry Initiative Review Team will rank jurisdiction applications. Ranking will be based on the merit of the program proposals. The KCD will develop the ranking process and further define ranking criteria in collaboration with the Team. See section titled Selection Criteria.

KCD’s guiding principles for directing and leveraging our resources include: strive to fund projects and programs across a geographically diverse landscape; projects are encouraged to address multiple natural resource priorities; projects should seek to align with established regional policy and research and planning processes; projects are encouraged to address economic as well as environmental challenges; projects are encouraged to address equity and social justice directly or indirectly; we strive to coordinate with local jurisdiction conservation programs and initiatives where they exist.
for proposed categories of ranking criteria. In the absence of a recommended framework, the KCD will continue to identify, plan and implement urban forest health management projects consistent with current KCD practices.

6. The KCD will implement the top 6 ranked urban forestry programs during the first two years of implementation. And at the end of two years, KCD will work with the Advisory Committee to determine if changes to the process or criteria are warranted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selection Criteria:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Criteria to determine ready-to-proceed status will include at least one of the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The jurisdiction has adopted or is in the process of developing a urban forestry program plan;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The jurisdiction has adopted or is in the process of developing a tree care ordinance;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The jurisdiction has secured or is in the process of obtaining Tree City USA designation; and/or</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The jurisdiction is currently receiving technical, educational, or financial assistance through the Washington Department of Natural Resources Urban and Community Forestry Program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Criteria to rank jurisdiction submitted urban forestry program proposals will include the following categories:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The program is regional or collaborative in approach – e.g., the program is multi-jurisdictional, and/or community-based, and/or multi-landowner focused;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The program has the support of the member jurisdiction’s leadership and there is demonstrable likelihood of program sustainability;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The program will be implemented with small contributions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assumptions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Jurisdictions must be a member of the KCD to be eligible for funding through the KCD urban forest health management program. Jurisdictions outside the boundary of KCD include the cities of Skykomish, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Pacific, and Milton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Three member jurisdictions per year will be served by the KCD urban forestry program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- $150,000 per year is available to assist jurisdictions implement urban forest health management programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Consistent with KCD Board priority, KCD investments in urban forest health management will implement conservation practices on private lands as well as public lands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- KCD LIP funds will be utilized to meet KCD urban forest health management program</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
performance measures, and can match other contributions such as jurisdiction general funds, KCD Member Jurisdiction Grant Program funds, staff time, etc.

- KCD jurisdictions that do not meet any of the ready-to-proceed criteria but demonstrate the desire to implement canopy and green infrastructure policies may reach out to KCD for assistance in developing one or more of the selection criteria elements.

### Budget:

*Staff cost estimates from the Implementation Plan associated with meeting performance measures are as follows:*  

$154,631

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*KCD’s guiding principles for directing and leveraging our resources include:*  
- strive to fund projects and programs across a geographically diverse landscape  
- projects are encouraged to address multiple natural resource priorities  
- projects should seek to align with established regional policy and research and planning processes  
- projects are encouraged to address economic as well as environmental challenges  
- projects are encouraged to address equity and social justice directly or indirectly  
- we strive to coordinate with local jurisdiction conservation programs and initiatives where they exist.
Program: Urban Shorelines and Riparian Habitat Improvement (a focus in Shorelines and Riparian Habitat)

Key Policy Question:
What process and criteria should be used to prioritize and distribute urban shoreline and riparian habitat improvement investments?

Background:
This worksheet focuses on KCD’s expanded focus in urban shoreline and riparian habitat improvements. Current KCD shorelines and riparian habitat improvement program activities focus on engaging rural residential, agricultural and some urban landowners and residents in planning and implementing aquatic area protection and enhancement practices. Each year, approximately 15 landowners are assisted with implementing shorelines and riparian habitat improvement projects on 23 acres and 2 miles of shoreline.

King Conservation District has prioritized working with our member jurisdictions and other partners to meet urban shorelines and riparian improvement objectives by providing technical and implementation support to landowners, residents and community groups. Properties that abut or include shorelines, creeks, lakes and wetlands will be enhanced to improve buffers and reduce pollution.

By 2019, KCD will enhance an additional 10 acres and 4 miles of shoreline and riparian habitat in urban areas and an a total of 37 acres and 14 miles of rural and agricultural shoreline and riparian habitat; and plant over 575,000 native trees and shrubs on a combination of these lands.

KCD programs traditionally have focused on improving natural resource conditions on private property, and a number of jurisdictions have indicated a desire for KCD to help increase jurisdiction capacity to improve shorelines and riparian habitat on public holdings as well private properties.

KCD’s guiding principles for directing and leveraging our resources include: strive to fund projects and programs across a geographically diverse landscape * projects are encouraged to address multiple natural resource priorities * projects should seek to align with established regional policy and research and planning processes * projects are encouraged to address economic as well as environmental challenges * projects are encouraged to address equity and social justice directly or indirectly * we strive to coordinate with local jurisdiction conservation programs and initiatives where they exist.
Recommendation:

**Project Process Overview:**

- First come, first served/shovel ready (through June 2016)

Beginning in 2015, KCD will engage stakeholders in exploring a possible framework to target urban shorelines and riparian habitat improvement investments. Concurrently, KCD will continue to plan and implement urban shorelines and riparian habitat improvement projects consistent with current KCD practices until an alternate process to guide investments is established. Additionally, KCD and the KCD AC will explore opportunities to implement additional pilot restoration projects in collaboration with member jurisdictions.

**Selection Process:**

1. January 2015 through June 2016: KCD will identify, plan and implement urban shoreline and riparian habitat improvement projects consistent with current KCD practices whereby landowners, residents and community groups are engaged on a voluntary basis through current KCD shoreline habitat technical assistance programs and the KCD Landowner Incentive Program.

2. Concurrently, the KCD will convene an Urban Aquatic Area Enhancement Initiative Review Team. The Team will be comprised of a representative from one large jurisdiction (Bellevue or Seattle), one representative each from 3 SCA member jurisdictions located within the boundary of the KCD, one KCD Board member, one urban aquatic area landowner, and one non-governmental representative each from other entities participating on the KCD AC.
   - The KCD Advisory Committee will appoint jurisdiction, landowner and other entity representatives to the Team.
   - Member jurisdiction representatives can be jurisdiction staff (technical or management) or elected officials.
   - The KCD Board representative will be selected by the KCD Board.

3. The Urban Aquatic Area Enhancement Initiative Review Team will decide whether an alternate framework will be utilized to target urban shorelines and riparian improvement investments, and if so by what criteria. For example, alternate criteria to direct investments could include geographic area (e.g., target basin), natural resource priority (e.g., TMDL), regulatory priority (e.g. salmon recovery plan objective), etc.

4. The KCD will apply an Urban Aquatic Area Enhancement Initiative Review Team-recommended framework to KCD urban shorelines and riparian habitat improvement investments. In the absence of a recommended framework, the KCD will continue to identify, plan and implement urban shoreline and riparian habitat improvement projects consistent with current KCD practices.
Selection Criteria:

No criteria are presented at this time as it would be premature to present criteria prior to exploring and identifying a possible alternate framework to guide urban shorelines and riparian habitat improvement investments.

Assumptions:

- KCD urban shoreline and riparian habitat improvement investments will be implemented consistent with current KCD practices until an alternate framework for directing investments has been recommended by the KCD Advisory Committee.

- KCD’s program allows for a range of activities, including technical assistance, distribution of plants through the Wetland Plant Cooperative, and full project planning and implementation.

- KCD anticipates an average of 10 projects per year will be implemented in urban areas within the boundary of the KCD. Should project size and complexity over-reach program funding, the number of projects implemented will be commensurate with the funding available.

- The number of technical assists resulting in urban shorelines and riparian habitat improvement projects will likely exceed the number of projects implemented, so that a list of potential projects will grow from year to year.

- Consistent with KCD Board priority, KCD investments in urban aquatic area enhancement projects will implement conservation practices on private lands as well as public lands.

- KCD LIP funds will be utilized to meet KCD urban shorelines and riparian habitat improvement program performance measures, and can match other funding sources such a jurisdiction general funds, KCD Member Jurisdiction Grant Program funds, etc.

**Budget**

*Staff cost estimates from the Implementation Plan associated with meeting performance standards for both Shoreline Education and Shoreline Implementation projects are as follows:*

$1,278,584*

*This figure includes all costs associated with providing marine and freshwater aquatic area enhancement project planning and implementation, and landowner education services.*
**Program:** Urban Shoreline and Riparian Education (a focus in Shorelines and Riparian Habitat)

**Key Policy Question:**
What process should be used to identify a framework for the geographic distribution of KCD urban freshwater shorelines and riparian education investments?

**Background**
Current KCD shorelines and riparian education programming focuses on engaging rural and urban landowners and residents in a workshop setting to learn about the functions and values of marine and freshwater aquatic systems, practical approaches to planning and implementing aquatic area protection and enhancement practices, and the range of programs and services available to assist them with improving shorelines and riparian habitat on their property. Approximately 60 marine shoreline and 40 rural agricultural freshwater shoreline landowners and residents are engaged each year through KCD shorelines and riparian education programming.

King Conservation District has prioritized working with our member jurisdictions and other partners to build an urban shorelines and riparian education program that engages private landowners whose lands abut or include freshwater shorelines, creeks, lakes and wetlands in learning how to protect and enhance aquatic habitat.

By 2019, KCD will provide education programming to 1,100 freshwater aquatic area landowners and residents.

A number of jurisdictions have indicated a desire to focus urban shorelines and riparian education programming on goals that assist jurisdictions with meeting their unique program needs and regulatory contexts.

**Recommendation:**

**Project Process Overview:**
- First come, first served/shovel ready (2015)
Beginning in 2015, KCD will engage stakeholders in exploring possible frameworks for the geographic distribution of KCD urban shorelines and riparian education investments. Concurrently, KCD will develop an urban shorelines and riparian education curriculum. In the absence of a recommended alternate framework to distribute the program investments, the KCD will distribute investments across the region by facilitating the KCD curriculum at least 1 time per year in each of the four quadrants of King County.

Additionally, KCD and the KCD AC will explore opportunities for additional pilot education projects with a nexus in aquatic area protection and enhancement regulations.

**Selection Process:**

1. The KCD will develop an urban shoreline and riparian education curriculum. The goal of the curriculum will be to increase the levels of aquatic area protection and enhancement in urban areas within the boundary of the KCD. The KCD will brief the AC on the outcome of curriculum development activities.
   
   - Where possible, existing curricula (local, regional and beyond) will be surveyed and adapted to develop a curriculum targeting King County urban shoreline and riparian habitat landowners.
   - To support the development of the curriculum, KCD will consult with representatives in the science and education communities who have working knowledge and experience in the fields of adult education and aquatic resources education.

2. The KCD will convene an Urban Aquatic Area Enhancement Initiative Review Team. The Team will be comprised of a representative from one large jurisdiction (Bellevue or Seattle), one representative each from 3 SCA member jurisdictions located within the boundary of the KCD, one KCD Board member, one urban aquatic area landowner, and one non-governmental representative each from other entities participating on the KCD AC.
   
   - The KCD Advisory Committee will appoint jurisdiction, landowner and other entity representatives to the Team.
   - Member jurisdiction representatives can be jurisdiction staff (technical or management) or elected officials.
   - The KCD Board representative will be selected by the KCD Board.

3. The Urban Aquatic Area Enhancement Initiative Review Team will decide whether it is desirable to utilize an alternate framework to target urban freshwater shoreline and riparian education investments, and if so by what criteria.

4. KCD will apply an Urban Aquatic Area Enhancement Initiative Review Team recommended framework to implement KCD urban freshwater shoreline and riparian education investments. In the absence of a recommended framework, the KCD will facilitate an urban freshwater shoreline and riparian education curriculum as follows:
- Education services (workshops, classes) will be facilitated across the region with a minimum of 1 per quadrant of the County each year.
- A minimum of four workshops will be offered each year to urban freshwater shoreline and riparian habitat landowners. These events will be in addition to current KCD education programming that delivers 3 workshops per year to marine shoreline landowners, and 2 workshops per year to agricultural landowners and livestock owners.
- Education programming will be cooperatively marketed with jurisdictions to promote participation of jurisdiction landowners and residents.
- Program metrics will be compiled and shared with jurisdictions to support KCD member jurisdictions in meeting performance measures associated with relevant regulatory requirements (e.g., SMP, NPDES, etc.).

5. Subsequent to launching the urban freshwater shoreline and riparian education curriculum, KCD will explore opportunities for a additional pilot education projects.

**Selection Criteria:**

No criteria are presented at this time as it would be premature to present criteria prior to exploring and identifying other possible frameworks for county-wide distribution of education programming investments.

**Assumptions:**

- KCD urban shoreline and riparian education investments will focus on raising participant awareness and knowledge about the importance of and how to protect and enhance shorelines and riparian habitat, and will encourage landowners to connect with programs and services (KCD and others) that assist with implementing aquatic resource stewardship practices.
- Participation in KCD shorelines and riparian education programming will be limited to residents and land owners within the boundary of the KCD.
- Current KCD shorelines and riparian education programs focused on rural landowners and marine shoreline landowners will continue to be implemented consistent with current KCD practices.

**Budget (for both Shoreline Education and Project Implementation)**

*Staff cost estimates from the Implementation Plan associated with meeting performance standards are as follows:*

$1,278,584

*This figure includes all costs associated with providing marine and freshwater aquatic area enhancement project planning and implementation, and landowner education services.*
**Program:** Rural Agriculture

**Key Policy Question:**

Establish criteria for identifying annual sub-basin targeted outreach and education activities with rural farm communities to address natural resource goals. Sub-basins will be consistent in size with KCD’s current work on its grant-funded Boise Creek project.

**Background**

King Conservation District proposes to 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.

**Recommendation:**

**Project Selection:**

- First come, first served/shovel ready
- Merit / Criteria

KCD will continue to provide first come, first served assistance to farms seeking guidance with natural resource stewardship across the district. The new work brings a sub-basin targeting outreach approach. The sub-basin targeting approach will reach a new sub-basin each year. The selection criteria and process below maps out how KCD proposes selecting sub-basins.

**Selection Process:**

1. Start with watershed scale resource concerns identified in regional plans (TMDLs, WRIA Plans, etc)
2. Seek watersheds where multiple partners are planning/investing resources to work with landowners to address regionally-identified resource concerns
3. Prioritize watersheds that have significant agricultural presence
4. Work with one new watershed each year; plan to actively work in each watershed for 2 years and sustain support for an additional 2 years.

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Assumptions:

Sub-basin targeting, linked with conservation impacts monitoring, has a higher impact on conservation outcomes over a shorter period of time than non-targeted conservation work.

This targeted approach is more labor and time intensive. Continuing to assist farmers and landowners on a first come first bases allows us to help folks make natural resource conservation improvements when they are ready to take action.

Budget

Staff cost estimates from the Implementation Plan associated with meeting performance standards are as follows:

$725,814
King Conservation District
2015
Advisory Committee Policy Question Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program:</th>
<th>Regional Food System, Part 1 – 2015 Grants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Key Policy Question:**

What criteria should KCD employ for the new Regional Food System grants to effectively target investments?

**Background:**

The King Conservation District recognizes the link between the economic health of farming and the farmer’s ability to make long-term commitments to the natural resource health of farmland.

The regional food program proposes a combination of grants and early action projects designed to support the local food economy, with a primary focus on supporting efforts that are directly linked to King County farmers.

In the development of this program, KCD staff have been actively engaged with regional planning efforts (King County Kitchen Cabinet and Puget Sound Regional Food Policy Council) and have received great input from a broad group of food system advisors. Kitchen Cabinet goals targeted by this program include: supporting the economic viability of continuing farmers, adding 25 new farmers, 400 new food producing acres each year and doubling the demand for local farm products over the next decade.

KCD will seek opportunities for this program 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.

There are two distinct parts to this program in 2015:

- 1- Grants
- 2- Early Action Projects

This Worksheet addresses recommendations related to grant program processes and funding criteria. The second worksheet addresses recommendations related to direct services and related contracted tasks.
Recommendation:

Timeline:

Project Process Overview:

✓ Merit / Criteria

Review Flow Chart

Selection Criteria:

1. Direct support/benefit to King County producers and farmland (40 Points)
   a) Address economic benefit to local farms
   b) Address local farm infrastructure needs/gaps
   c) Target other natural resource priorities on farmland
   d) For farmers marketing projects- identify how project will increase demand for local (KC) farm products
2. Alignment with regional goals (Kitchen Cabinet Action Plan and PSRFPC Action Plan Recommendations) (30 Points)
3. Alignment with KCD Guiding Principles (see footnote) (20 Points)
4. Sustainability (10 Points)
   a) Demonstrate ability to sustain after contract/grant funding ends
5. Scalable/Replicable

KCD’s guiding principles for directing and leveraging our resources include: strive to fund projects and programs across a geographically diverse landscape * projects are encouraged to address multiple natural resource priorities * projects should seek to align with established regional policy and research and planning processes * projects are encouraged to address economic as well as environmental challenges * projects are encouraged to address equity and social justice directly or indirectly * we strive to coordinate with local jurisdiction conservation programs and initiatives where they exist.
**Assumptions:**

- KCD Early Action Projects will include activities that have been specifically identified through the program development work.
- Grant funded activities include those that meet the program criteria and are initiated by groups outside of the Conservation District.
- Loan funding is on hold because more information and coordination around existing financing options are needed to determine how to best add value to the current financing options.

**Goals (Benchmarks to be developed):**

KCD proposes to develop and administer a robust program of grants and services that address the following regional goals:

- 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. KCD’s current Municipal Jurisdiction Grant program, for example, leverages an average of $3.70 for every $1.00 of KCD funding. If KCD developed a similar ability to leverage external funding in this arena, over $16M of resources would be allocated to the development of a robust regional food system in the next five years.

**2015 BUDGET (Approximate):**

*Staff cost estimates from the Implementation Plan associated with meeting performance standards are as follows:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Development and Management</td>
<td>$200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Action Projects</td>
<td>$235,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Funding</td>
<td>$665,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants and Early Actions</td>
<td>$900,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL BUDGET</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,100,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Program:** Regional Food System, Part 2 – Early Action Efforts

**Key Policy Questions:**

What criteria should KCD use to make Regional Food Program investments in Early Action Projects in 2015? Is there concurrence on the proposed list of Early Action Projects for 2015?

**Background:**

The King Conservation District recognizes the link between the economic health of farming and the farmer’s ability to make long-term commitments to the natural resource health of farmland.

The regional food program proposes a combination of grants and early action projects designed to support the local food economy, with a primary focus on supporting efforts that are directly linked to King County farmers.

In the development of this program, KCD staff have been actively engaged with regional planning efforts (King County Kitchen Cabinet and Puget Sound Regional Food Policy Council) and have received great input from a broad group of food system advisors. Kitchen Cabinet goals targeted by this program include: supporting the economic viability of continuing farmers, adding 25 new farmers, 400 new food producing acres each year and doubling the demand for local farm products over the next decade.

KCD will seek opportunities for this program 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.

There are two distinct parts to this program in 2015: - Grants and Early Action Projects

This Worksheet addresses recommendations related to proposed KCD Early Action Projects. See the first worksheet for recommendations related to the grant offering.

**Recommendation:**

**Project Process Overview:**

This program’s elements focus on specific action areas identified through stakeholder input and aligning the outcomes with regional food system goals set out in the Kitchen Cabinet action plan that are best accomplished through early action projects. In future years, these funds will instead be included in grants, loans, and other services.

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Early Action Criteria:

1. The action was identified by numerous stakeholders and in regional plan goals.
2. It is a critical early step towards meeting regional food system economic goals.
3. The action is clearly defined as a specific project/activity.
4. It could either be accomplished by KCD or through contracted work, coordinated by KCD in 2015.

Recommended Early Actions

Infrastructure Support: gaps in available farm infrastructure, especially for entry level/ small scale farms were identified as a critical focal area for this program. Farmers in particular asked us to purchase and loan out the below equipment to help address production challenges:

Farm Equipment Loan - $50,000
1- Small Scale Chicken Processing- several other Conservation Districts in the region make small scale processing equipment available for on farm chicken processing. King County farmers are on waiting lists for the Pierce Conservation District processor. Having this equipment available in King County would enable small flock chicken farmers to bring poultry to market.
2- No-Till Drill- This seeding implement enables farmers to overseed forage, hay, and cover crops into the ground without having to plow the soil in advance. This saves time and money and is recognized as a critical tool for reducing soil erosion and for sequestering carbon in the soil, a key role for farmers in addressing climate change.

One Stop Shop Farm Services Coordination Project- $50,000 New and experienced farmers have shared that navigating the current public, non-profit, and commercial support services for farming can be frustrating because these services are often not well coordinated. This project would coordinate and integrate these different support systems so that new and continuing farmers could get holistic farm services support - One Stop Shop. This effort would involve the many vital services that currently exist for topics such as marketing, financing, production, conservation, and permitting and would seek to address the known gaps in these key support areas.

Institutional Local Purchasing Best Practices/ Case Study- $25,000 This project would build upon past work around institutional buying, looking at best practices of a local health care company or educational institution, and work with other institutions to increase demand for locally grown food products.

Farmer’s Market Coordinator Support- $50,000 This project would establish a peer to peer support system for market managers to help increase adoption of best market management practices, with goals to increase participation of local farmers and to expand the Fresh Bucks program to additional markets.

Model Farm Cooperative- $10,000
King County has its first farmers cooperative, which grew from two to five farms in its first year and to 14 farms in its second year. KCD proposes to provide minimal support to this new organization early in the season until it receives more funds in the fall. KCD has secured a verbal commitment from the Snoqualmie Valley Co-op to serve as a model in the future for other farmers across King County.
**Auburn Good Food Bag** - $10,000
Modest support to build on last year’s development of a community-based food access partnership among the Auburn Food Bank, the Auburn International Farmers Market, Seattle Tilth, Washington CANI, and King Conservation District and use that partnership to build out a more robust food access delivery model.

**Information gathering support** – $40,000
Build capacity to develop solid baselines against which to measure KCD Regional Food System Grant projects, other KCD programs, and other partner agency efforts.

As KCD works with its Advisory Committee and other stakeholders to develop its new programs, a small number of early action projects have been brought forward as sensible jump starts for the new efforts.

KCD’s guiding principles for directing and leveraging our resources include: strive to fund projects and programs across a geographically diverse landscape * projects are encouraged to address multiple natural resource priorities * projects should seek to align with established regional policy and research and planning processes * projects are encouraged to address economic as well as environmental challenges * projects are encouraged to address equity and social justice directly or indirectly * we strive to coordinate with local jurisdiction conservation programs and initiatives where they exist.
Assumptions:

- KCD Early Action Projects will include activities that have been specifically identified through the program development work.
- Grant funded activities include those that meet the program criteria and are initiated by groups outside of the Conservation District.
- Loan funding is on hold because more information and coordination around existing financing options are needed to determine how to best add value to the current financing options.

2015 BUDGET (Approximate):

*Staff cost estimates from the Implementation Plan associated with meeting performance standards are as follows:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Development and Management</th>
<th>$200,000</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early Action Projects - 2015</td>
<td>$235,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant Funding - 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grants and Early Actions</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL BUDGET</td>
<td>$1,100,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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