

**CLARK COUNTY
STAFF REPORT**

DEPARTMENT/DIVISION: Environmental Services / Policy and Planning / Legacy Lands

DATE: January 6, 2015

REQUEST: Authorize the Acting County Manager to execute an agreement to provide the Columbia Land Trust \$45,000 in Conservation Futures Funds to acquire 51 acres of land along the Rock Creek tributary to the East Fork Lewis River.

CHECK ONE: Consent Hearing Chief Administrative Officer

BACKGROUND: The Lower Columbia River Fish and Wildlife Sub-basin Plan identifies the preservation of the Rock Creek Tributary to the East Fork Lewis River as a priority for recovering steelhead populations in the Lower Columbia River System. Rock Creek Reach 3, in which the parcels to be acquired (AP #s 250784-000, 250782-000 and a portion of 251002-000) are located, is designated as a Tier 1 stream reach for Endangered Species Act-listed steelhead, supporting spawning and egg incubation. The subject property includes 4,500 feet of shoreline and the creek includes pools for holding and rearing steelhead. The conservation significance of the property was affirmed through the 2014 update to the Clark County Conservation Areas Acquisition Plan and a specific acquisition project was identified in the Project Opportunities – Partnership Projects List.

Columbia Land Trust successfully competed for Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant No. 13-1113 in the amount of \$197,831 to acquire and pursue restoration activities on the property. The Land Trust has also received a commitment of \$45,000 from the East Fork Legacy Fund, a fund dedicated to the protection, restoration and public use of the East Fork Lewis River system managed by the Community Foundation of Southwest Washington, and is requesting \$45,000 in Conservation Futures funding to complete the project. The Land Trust executed a purchase and sale agreement to acquire the 51-acre property on December 8, 2014. The proposed agreement is the mechanism through which the county authorizes Conservation Futures funding support to the Land Trust. The agreement is enclosed as Attachment A. Additional background information may be found in Attachment B, the executed purchase and sale agreement.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: The Lower Columbia River Fish Recovery Board adopted the Lower Columbia River Fish and Wildlife Sub-basin Plan in 2010 after an extensive public process involving, state, local and federal resource agencies, cities and counties within the Lower Columbia Sub-Basin, citizens, landowners, and a variety of stakeholder groups. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board approved Grant No. 13-1113 in December, 2013 after a competitive grant review involving the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board Technical Advisory Committee, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Technical Advisory Committee and the Lower Columbia River Fish Recovery Board. The Clark County Board of Commissioners approved the update to the Conservation Areas Acquisition Plan in March, 2014.

BUDGET AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS: The Columbia Land Trust expects to close on the project in the first quarter of 2015. Clark County will provide funding as reimbursement to the Land Trust for acquisition expenses. The \$45,000 in Conservation Futures support is approximately 19.5% of the land cost of \$230,000 established through a fair market appraisal. Implicit in the grant-funded project is an allocation of approximately \$23,000 for site restoration activities including decommissioning of a forest road and removal of culverts. The Land Trust will own and manage the property. Funding to support the acquisition is included in the adopted 2015-16 Conservation Futures budget.

FISCAL IMPACTS: Yes (see Fiscal Impacts Attachment) No



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