



May 31, 2023

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners
Mark McCauley, County Administrator

FROM: Michael Dawson, Environmental Public Health Water Quality
Manager
Tami Pokorny, Natural Resources Program Coordinator

DATE: **June 5, 2023**

SUBJECT: **Agenda Request:** Presentation of Conservation Futures Fund
Citizen Oversight Committee Funding Recommendations for
2023

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

Public Health and Conservation Futures Fund Citizen Oversight Committee (CF Committee) Chair
Cameron Jones request an opportunity to present the Committee's funding recommendations for 2023.

ANALYSIS/STRATEGIC GOALS:

Three project applications for Conservation Futures funding were received in 2023:

1. Lower Chimacum Creek Mainstem Acquisitions
2. North Barry Snow Creek
3. Schmidt Farm – Phase II

The combined total request for this year is \$186,000. Conservation Futures Funds available to projects in 2023 equal \$230,000. At its April 25th meeting, the CFF Committee voted unanimously to recommend all three projects as presented for full funding.

The purpose of the CFF Program is to address the “general and increasing need to provide a system of public open spaces...for the health, welfare, benefit and safety of the residents of Jefferson County,” and to maintain “Jefferson County as a desirable place to live, visit and locate businesses.” Conservation futures tax levy collections, authorized under RCW 84.34.230 are an important means of retaining community character and accomplishing open space policies and objectives of the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan. The goal of the program is to preserve and protect the county's open space resources from development, and from being “negatively and permanently affected.”

Public Health will separately request that the BoCC hold a public hearing on the applications and make funding determinations in coming weeks. The applications themselves will be included with that briefing packet as well and may be viewed online at <http://www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commissioners/Conservation/conservation.asp>.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Costs for the presentation are negligible.

RECOMMENDATION:

Review the three project proposals brought forth by the CFF Committee, hear the Chair's presentation of the Committee's recommendations, and ask questions.

REVIEWED BY:



Mark McCauley, County Administrator

6/1/23

Date



615 Sheridan Street
Port Townsend, WA 98368
www.JeffersonCountyPublicHealth.org

To: Jefferson County Board of Commissioners

From: Cameron Jones, Chair
Conservation Futures Fund Citizen Oversight Committee

Date: May 31, 2023

Subject: Conservation Futures Fund Citizen Oversight Committee –
2023 Funding Round Recommendations

As the new chair, I am writing to provide you with the Conservation Futures Fund Citizen Oversight Committee's (CFF Committee) funding recommendations for the 2023 cycle. As authorized in RCW 84.34 and by the direction of the Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners, the CFF Committee receives applications from the community to fund projects that will conserve lands as open space for compatible economic uses and enjoyment.

This past March, the CFF Committee received three applications for consideration in this cycle that are presented with this memo. Each of the projects is sponsored by Jefferson County Land Trust and is located in Jefferson County outside of City of Port Townsend boundaries.

- Lower Chimacum Creek Mainstem Acquisitions: requesting \$47,000 in acquisitions funding and \$5,000 in O & M for a total request of \$52,000.
- North Barry Snow Creek: requesting \$69,000 in acquisitions funding and \$5,000 in O & M for a total request of \$74,000.
- Schmidt Farm - Phase II of Quilcene Headwaters to Bay: requesting \$55,000 for the acquisition of a conservation easement and \$5,000 for O & M for a total request of \$60,000.

The total requested amount for all three projects is \$186,000 with \$15,000 of this to be used to reimburse operations and maintenance needs. Usually the amount requested for projects exceeds available funding. However, in this cycle, \$230,000 is available to support 2023 projects including up to \$43,000 for operations and maintenance.

Committee members visited the sites on March 29th, and sponsors presented their projects and answered questions during our April 4th CFF Committee meeting. Each member separately scored the projects on a set of 15 questions in order to assess the merits of protecting each property for open space and the likelihood of project success. The project ranking, as determined by the scores alone, was reviewed, discussed, and confirmed at the April 25th meeting.

The CFF Committee ranked the projects as follows:

1. Schmidt Farm - Phase II of Quilcene Headwaters to Bay: 236.182 points (74% of the 321 points available)
2. Lower Chimacum Creek Mainstem Acquisitions: 224.455 points (70%)
3. North Barry Snow Creek: 214.727 (67%)

The CFF Committee passed a motion that all three projects are worthy of funding. There were ten yes votes and one no vote. After further discussion and evaluation, the CFF Committee voted unanimously to recommend all three projects to you for full funding.

I want to express my gratitude to the sponsors for submitting these projects, and to the CF Committee members for their time and dedication in evaluating the proposals.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at permiejones@gmail.com or Tami Pokorny at tpokorny@co.jefferson.wa.us. I look forward to attending your June 5th meeting when you consider these recommendations and will be happy to discuss them at that time as well.

Thank you for your consideration of the CFF Committee's recommendations for the 2023 funding cycle.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cameron Jones', is written above the printed name.

Cameron Jones
CFF Committee Chair



Conservation Futures Citizen Oversight Committee (CFCOC)

Ranking Meeting: Hybrid between East Jefferson Fire and Rescue and Zoom Connection

April 25, 2023 from 3:00 to 5:00 PM
Draft Summary

Members Present: Mary Biskup, District 1; Guy Dobyns, District 3; Rob Harbour, Vice Chair, Interest – Working Lands; Richard Jahnke, Interest – Coastal Areas; Cameron Jones, Chair, Interest – Equity; Kalyn Marab, District 3; E. Ryan McMackin, Interest – Wetlands; Joanne Pontrello, District 2; Ron Rempel, Interest – Wildlife Conservation Biology; Craig Schrader, Interest – Climate Change; Dave Wilkinson, District 1

Members Absent: Jessica Randall, Interest – Ecosystem Services

County Staff Present: Michael Dawson, (Department of Health), Tami Pokorny, Natural Resources Program Coordinator

Others Present: Rebekah Brooks, Recorder (Rebekah Brooks Contracting)

I. Call to Order

Chair Cameron Jones called the meeting to order at 3:05 PM.

II. Welcome and Introductions

III. Approval of Minutes

Rob Harbour moved to approve the CFCOC minutes for the 4/4/23 Presentation Meeting as written; Richard Jahnke seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.

IV. Guest Observer Comments

None

V. Old Business

Annual Reports for 2022

Tami Pokorny reminded the group that the Annual Reports were received prior to the 4/4/23 CFCOC meeting, but that there had not been enough time to get into them. The group discussed the reports and whether a motion was needed to approve them. Mary Biskup asked about the two lots that were not purchased as part of the Dosewallips Lazy

C project; Tami explained that the landowner withdrew willingness to sell those parcels. The CFCOC may choose to retain those designated funds with the Committee, or to keep the funds available to the project in case they could be used for a different parcel. After three years, the sponsor may become ineligible and may need to request an extension. In the last eight months, the Dosewallips has shifted away from the Lazy C, but it will always be a place where the River will return so landowner willingness may change again in time. The group agreed to leave the funds with the project in case they could be used. Richard Jahnke noted that with that exception, the other projects appeared to be proceeding as planned. ***Mary Biskup moved to accept the Annual Reports; Rob Harbour seconded. The motion passed with all in favor.***

VI. Sub-committee Reports

None

VI. New Business

A. Appearance of Fairness Forms

*Guy Dobyns will send in a digital copy of his Appearance of Fairness Forms. Tami Pokorny asked the members of the CFCOC whether there were any objections to the participation of any members, whether anyone stood to gain financially, whether everyone was able to hear the proposal fairly, whether any members had anything to declare, and whether they had all seen the video or attended the site visit for the Lower Chimacum Creek Mainstem, the North Barry, and the Schmidt Farm projects. There were no issues with the appearance of fairness for any Committee members on any of the projects.

B. Review of Ranking Process

Tami Pokorny gave an overview of the ranking and scoring process for the projects. A project must score at least 70% to make it automatically worthy of funding. The Committee may vote to consider a lower scored project worthy of funding.

C. Presentation of Composite Scores for:

- a. Lower Chimacum Creek Mainstem: 70%
- b. North Barry: 67%
- c. Schmidt Farm: 74%

D. Project Ranking and Funding Recommendations

The three project requests summed to \$186,000; the Committee had \$230,000 available for this funding round. ***Rob Harbour moved to find all three projects worthy of funding;***

Richard Jahnke seconded. Ron Rempel led discussion on the question of worthiness of the Schmidt Farm project. Although the project scored highly, Ron pointed out that this was due to a lot of erroneous information in the project details and suggested that the Committee consider how to address that in future projects. Rob Harbour agreed that he did not accept the habitat claims of the project, but he still viewed it as a valuable agricultural project. Kalyn Marab noted that the agricultural claims were a stretch because the owners were only leasing the land for a couple of horses. Mary Biskup added that the soils were good for agricultural use. The group discussed how to score agricultural properties more accurately; how to gauge habitat claims and discern where habitat information comes from; how to fairly weight the three main categories of agriculture, habitat, and silviculture; and the importance of restricting development and protecting land in perpetuity. Cameron Jones suggested that this would be a good conversation to have in a workshop where the Committee could get some clarity on information sources. Dave Wilkinson brought up the Committee's understanding of property easements; this easement only allowed for potentially, sometime in the future, some kind of restoration to take place if the landowner desired. He agreed that some of the statements in the application were misleading, and questioned how to handle situations when information in an application was incomplete, inaccurate by omission, or had a lack of clarity. Mary added that the conservation easement may help future farmers afford the property with its prime agricultural land. Ron pointed out that the property had only 0.01 CFS of water available, so there was not much water for farming. Rob mentioned that dry land farming had a future in the area, and that there was value in protecting the land now for a potentially beneficial future use. ***The Committee voted on the motion with eleven members in favor of finding the three projects worthy of funding, and one member voting against. The motion passed.*** Kalyn asked Ron if he voted against the motion because of the Schmidt Farm project; Ron said yes and that he did not have any issues with the other two projects.

Tami Pokorny displayed the project scoresheets, and the group went over the various questions and relative points given. Dave pointed out that the question of how well a sponsor performs under agreement is difficult to answer because the only information the Committee has is from the Project Reports. The best he could come up with is to give this question a mid-value. He suggested that the CFCOC consider restructuring that question to define it more objectively. Rob added that the Jefferson Land Trust did not wish to get involved with the Committee's request for additional reports in the past, which would have helped to answer that question. Dave noted that because of this, the Committee could only gauge a project's potential, rather than what a project actually did. Mary asked about the public input question, and what constituted as public input: was a project just within an area that the sponsor designated as important, or was it part of a public vetting process? Dave also brought up the climate change question that the CFCOC had tried to write to address global climate change; responses had largely been about whether the specific properties would be resilient, so the question might not be completely clear. The group discussed how to measure impact and weight points, especially at scale. Richard Jahnke noted that it was good to have different scores and

points of view in the Committee. ***Ron Rempel moved to fund all three projects at their requested amounts; Joanne Pontrello seconded.*** The CFCOC talked about whether to rank the projects but did not do so. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

VII. Announcements/Administrative

A. Staff Update

Tami Pokorny said that the County had hired John Gussman to film and photograph CFCOC projects, including past projects. Central Services was interested in helping the Committee make story maps. Dave Wilkinson suggested that the group make bullet points about each project, and then make sure those points were captured in the videos. Tami said the contract was not for a large amount of money, but that the Committee could request specific issues to be addressed in the videos. Richard Jahnke mentioned that the project applications were listed on the County website, but not on the map. *Tami will investigate that. She also asked the group to think about how to get more high-quality project photos. Tami added that the Quimper Wildlife Corridor project was on the verge of closing and could close around 6/2/23.

B. Next Meeting

The group discussed what they wanted to accomplish at the next meeting, how much time to put into project materials, how to rank Operations and Maintenance versus acquisition or combination projects, how to set up a workshop with sponsors to attract new sponsors and get feedback, and the possibility of partnerships between new sponsors. Tami Pokorny went over some difficulties in working with new sponsors due to County legal requirements. *Ron Rempel requested a County map to search out areas that had never received funding or applied for projects. Tami Pokorny noted that the West End had a different legacy and was just starting to consider acquisitions. Cameron Jones suggested forming a subcommittee to go over the items discussed; Ron suggested scheduling a meeting first that might inform the subcommittee. ***Ron Rempel moved to ask Tami to schedule a meeting for midsummer to discuss the approach to scoring and following that to form a subcommittee to work on the associated language; Rob Harbour seconded.*** Discussion followed on the timing and topics of the meeting. Mary Biskup suggested that Committee members email their areas of interest to Tami so that the group can have an idea of where the concerns were. ***The motion passed unanimously.*** *Tami asked the group to let her know whether they intended to attend the next Board of County Commissioners hearing, and to send her quotes about the projects they had approved.

VII. Guest Observer Comments

Ron Rempel commented that he liked the East Jefferson Fire and Rescue meeting hall for meeting in. *Tami Pokorny said she would aim to reserve it for the next CFCOC meeting.

IX. Adjournment

Chair Cameron Jones adjourned the meeting at 4:38 PM.

Meeting summary prepared by Rebekah Brooks.

Action Items:

****Guy Dobyns will send in a digital copy of his Appearance of Fairness Forms.***

****Tami Pokorny will investigate the CFCOC project map on the County website.***

****Ron Rempel requested a County map to search out areas that had never received funding or applied for projects.***

****Tami asked the group to let her know whether they intended to attend the next Board of County Commissioners hearing, and to send her quotes about the projects they had approved.***

****Tami said she would aim to reserve the East Jefferson Fire and Rescue meeting hall for the next CFCOC meeting.***