

October 2, 2025

**OFFICE OF THE HEARING EXAMINER
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

Telephone (206) 477-0860

hearingexaminer@kingcounty.gov

www.kingcounty.gov/independent/hearing-examiner

**REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE
METROPOLITAN KING COUNTY COUNCIL**

SUBJECT: Department of Natural Resources and Parks file no. **E24CT020**
Proposed ordinance no. **2025-0069**
Parcel no/s. **422440-0250, 422440-0200, 422440-0265, 422440-0320, and
422440-0260**

CAROLYN STEMSHORN AND SEAN KLONES

Open Space Taxation Application (Public Benefit Rating System)

Location: [REDACTED] Ravensdale

Applicants: **Carolyn Stemshorn and Sean Klones**

[REDACTED]
Ravensdale, WA 98051

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

King County: Department of Natural Resources and Parks

represented by **Megan Kim**

201 S. Jackson Street

Suite 5601

Seattle, WA 98104

Telephone: (206) 477-4788

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Department's Recommendation:	Approve 5.37 acres for 40% of assessed value
	Conditionally approve 5.37 acres for 30% of assessed value
Examiner's Recommendation:	Approve 5.37 acres for 40% of assessed value
	Conditionally approve 5.37 acres for 30% of assessed value

PRELIMINARY REPORT:

On February 11, 2025, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) submitted its report on file no. E24CT020 to the Examiner.

PUBLIC HEARING:

After reviewing the preliminary report and examining available information on file with the application, the Examiner conducted a remote public hearing on the application on September 24, 2025.

Participants at the public hearing and the exhibits offered and entered are listed in the attached minutes. A verbatim recording of the hearing is available in the Hearing Examiner’s Office.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

1. General Information:

Owners:	Sean Klones and Carolyn Stemshorn 25834 348th Ave SE Ravensdale, WA 98051
Location:	25834 348th Avenue SE, Ravensdale
STR:	NE 26-22-07
Zoning:	RA5
Parcel nos:	422440-0250, 422440-0200, 422440-0265, 422440-0320, and 422440-0260
Total acreage:	5.95 acres

2. The Applicants timely filed an application to King County for the Public Benefit Rating System (PBRS) program current use valuation of the property to begin in 2026. As required by law, notification of the application occurred.

3. A summary of relevant PBRS categories follows below. (Plain text represents a category an applicant requested an award for and that DNRP agrees is warranted. Any ~~striketrough~~ represents a category an applicant requested an award for but that DNRP disagrees is warranted. Any *italics* represents a category an applicant did not request an award for, but that DNRP nonetheless concludes is warranted. And any *asterisk* represents a category where DNRP finds an award is warranted, but only if certain contingencies or conditions are met.)

PBRS categories:	<u>Open Space Resources</u>	
	Farm and agricultural conservation land	5
	Significant wildlife or salmonid habitat	5
	Special animal site	0
	<u>Bonus Categories</u>	
	Environmental education access	
	*Resource restoration	3
		*
	<hr/>	
	Total	13

The DNRP-recommended score of 13 points results in a current use valuation of 40% of assessed value for the enrolled portion of the property.

4. **Farm and agricultural conservation land:** The property contains more than five acres of traditional farmland that is being managed according to an approved King Conservation District farm management plan.
5. **Significant wildlife or salmonid habitat:** Even though the enrolling area of the property is predominately pastureland, DNRP found that the pastureland and clearings do provide foraging and bedding opportunities for Elk. DNRP verified this by referencing studies by the Washington State Department Fish and Wildlife that indicate the property supports foraging and important habitat for Elk. Elk are defined in King County Comprehensive Plan as a Species of Local Importance.
6. **Environmental education access:** Applicants have hosted, and plan to continue hosting, annual farm tours showcasing best management practices (e.g. surface water management, noxious weed control, excluded areas) that have been implemented according to their approved farm management plan. These tours are in partnership with the King Conservation District, and DNRP has verified that the property has value for environmental education purposes.
7. **Resource restoration:** There is a seasonal stream running through the southern part of the property that Applicants intend to restore. If by **November 1, 2025**, Applicants submit a resource restoration plan that addresses restoring the portion of the stream, and DNRP approves that plan by **December 31, 2025**, an additional five points may be awarded administratively under the resource restoration category; this would increase the score to 18 points and result in a current use valuation of 30% of assessed value for the enrolled portion of the property. To be eligible for these additional points the Applicants must implement the plan and submit annual monitoring reports to DNRP for at least five years following enrollment. The reports must describe the progress and success of the restoration project and include photographs to document the success.
8. As to the land area recommended for PBRS enrollment, the Applicants requested 6 acres and DNRP recommends 5.37 acres. (Enrollment acreage is the entire parcels less the excluded area, as calculated by DNRP. In the event the County Assessor's official parcel size is revised, the PBRS acreage shall be administratively adjusted to reflect that change.)

9. We find the facts set forth in DNRP’s preliminary report and testimony at the September 24, 2025, public hearing correct and we incorporate them by reference. We will provide copies of this report and DNRP’s report to the Metropolitan King County Council for final approval.
10. Approval of 13 points and a current use valuation of 40% of assessed value, and conditional approval of five additional points and 30% of assessed value, for 5.37 acres is consistent with KCC Chapter 20.36 and with the purposes and intent of King County to maintain, preserve, conserve, and otherwise continue in existence adequate open space lands and to assure the use and enjoyment of natural resources and scenic beauty for the economic and social well-being of King County and its citizens.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. APPROVE a current use valuation of 40% of assessed value for the 5.37-acre enrolled portion of the property.
2. CONDITIONALLY APPROVE additional credit for the resource restoration category, subject to submittal of a resource restoration plan by **November 1, 2025**, subsequent DNRP approval of that plan by **December 31, 2025**, and implementation and reporting as described in KCC 20.36.100.D.5. Award of credit under this category will increase the point total by 5 points, resulting in a current use valuation of 30% of assessed value for the enrolled portion of the property.

DATED October 2, 2025.



Peter Heineccius
Hearing Examiner pro tem

NOTICE OF RIGHT TO APPEAL

A party may appeal an Examiner report and recommendation by following the steps described in KCC 20.22.230. By **4:30 p.m.** on **October 27, 2025**, an electronic appeal statement must be sent to Clerk.Council@kingcounty.gov, to hearingexaminer@kingcounty.gov, and to the party email addresses on the front page of this report and recommendation. Please consult KCC 20.22.230 for the exact filing requirements.

If a party fails to timely file an appeal, the Council does not have jurisdiction to consider that appeal. Conversely, if the appeal requirements of KCC 20.22.230 are met, the Examiner will notify parties and interested persons and will provide information about next steps in the appeal process.

**MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 24, 2025, HEARING ON THE APPLICATION
OF CAROLYN STEMSHORN AND SEAN KLONES, FILE NO. E24CT020**

Peter Heineccius was the Hearing Examiner in this matter. Megan Kim and Carolyn Stemshorn participated in the hearing.

The following exhibits were offered and entered into the hearing record:

Exhibit no. 1	DNRP report to the Hearing Examiner
Exhibit no. 2	<i>Reserved for future submission of the affidavit of hearing publication</i>
Exhibit no. 3	Legal notice and introductory ordinance to the King County Council
Exhibit no. 4	Arcview/orthophotograph and aerial map
Exhibit no. 5	Application signed and notarized
Exhibit no. 6	Farm Management Plan

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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

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I, Jessica Oscoy, certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that I transmitted the **REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION TO THE METROPOLITAN KING COUNTY COUNCIL** to those listed on the attached page as follows:

- EMAILED to all County staff listed as parties/interested persons and parties with e-mail addresses on record.
- placed with the United States Postal Service, through Quadient-Impress, with sufficient postage, as FIRST CLASS MAIL in an envelope addressed to the non-County employee parties/interested persons to addresses on record.

DATED October 2, 2025.



Jessica Oscoy
Administrator

Bernstein, Bill

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

Bonyeau, Elenore

Department of Assessments

Carolyn Stemshorn, Sean Klones

Hardcopy

Hay, Melani

Metropolitan King County Council

Kim, Megan

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

Ngo, Jenny

Metropolitan King County Council