



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance Board Votes to Endorse August 6 King County Parks Levy

Kirkland, WA – July 22, 2013 – King County Parks, which include Big Finn Hill Park and Juanita Woodlands, are at risk of falling into disrepair and closure if a proposed bond levy is not passed by voters on the August 6th ballot. The Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance (FHNA) Board of Directors has voted to recommend that voters approve the measure known as King County Proposition 1. Ballots were mailed to households last week.

Proposition 1 is expected to generate about \$60 million annually for maintenance and operations of King County’s regional parks system consisting of over 200 parks and 175 miles of regional trails. The levy will make up approximately 70% of the park division’s operating budget because the King County Council eliminated general fund support for the parks system in 2011.

“The levy is essential if our county parks on Finn Hill and throughout our region are to remain clean, safe, and open,” said Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance Board Member Mathew Pruitt, who also served on the parks levy task force that recommended the levy to the King County Executive Dow Constantine. “The lack of general fund support in the county budget puts our parks at severe risk.”

Proposition 1 is a six year property tax levy lid lift of 18.77 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value or about \$56 per year for a family living in a \$300,000 home. It will replace two county parks levies, amounting to 13.4 cents per \$1000 of assessed valuation, that expire at the end of 2013. The increase works out to roughly \$16 annually for a family living in a \$300,000 home.

The money raised by the levy will allow King County Parks and Recreation Division to fund maintenance and operations of the parks system, perform infrastructure repair and replacement, acquire and conserve open space, and develop regional trail corridors. Some of the levy funds will help develop the Eastside Rail Corridor in Kirkland and eight other cities. The levy also provides enough funding to acquire and protect approximately 450 acres per year of open space land. Approximately \$4.2 million dollars per year will be distributed to the county’s 39 cities to support local park and trail systems, and another \$4.2 million per year will go to the Woodland Park Zoo to fund conservation and environmental education programs.

“The Finn Hill Alliance is committed to preserving, protecting, and restoring the extraordinary natural environment of our community,” said board president Scott Morris. “The levy is in line with our values as a community and is a modest investment toward a park system we all benefit from,” he added. “We need the levy funds to continue restoration work in our Big Finn Hill and Juanita Woodlands Parks. We strongly encourage residents of Finn Hill and Kirkland to vote yes on August 6.”

For more details, visit www.finnhillalliance.org and click on the link to the King County web site page regarding the levy proposal.