

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL AGENDA BILL

NO. 1995 -412

CLEARANCES	Initial	Date	Date Received in Council Office	Agenda Date	Assigned To:
Originator: County Council		10/10/95		10/17/95	Council - Introduction
Division Head:				10/31/95	Public Hearing
Dept. Head:					
Prosecutor:	DG	10/11/95			
Purchasing/Budget:					
Executive:					

SUBJECT:

Ordinance eliminating the Conservation Futures property tax

ATTACHMENTS:

Proposed Ordinance

SUMMARY STATEMENT: *Please complete sections of box as appropriate & explain the item below.*

Related County Contract #: N/A	Should clerk schedule a hearing? (Y/N) Y	Requested Date: 10/31/95
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This ordinance would eliminate the Conservation Futures property tax as of the end of 1995. In addition, the Conservation Futures Fund would be eliminated, as was directed by prior Council motion. Any money left in the Conservation Futures Fund will be retained in a restricted account within the Current Expense Fund, and can only be spent for those items that are allowed under the Conservation Futures section of county and state laws.

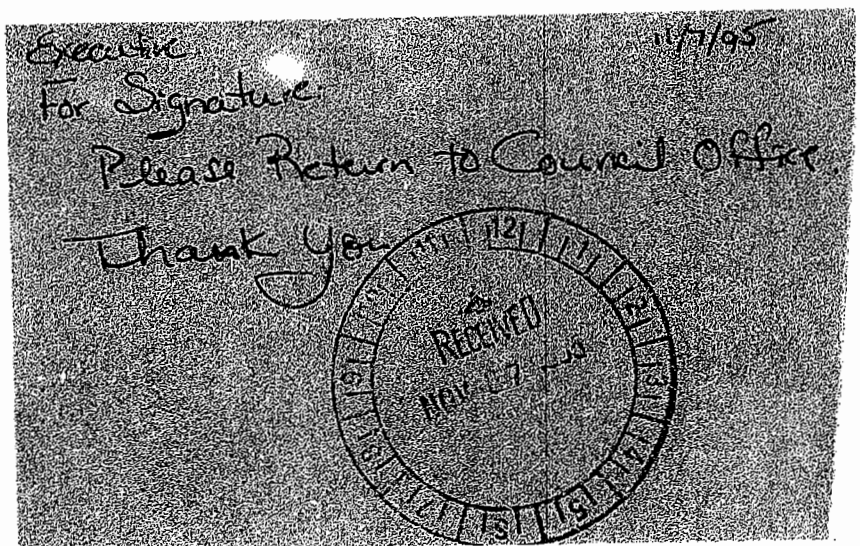
CLERK'S RECOMMENDED MOTION (for final action):

I move to approve the ordinance.

COUNCIL ACTION TAKEN:

10/17/95: Introduced

10/31/95: Adopted as amended 4-3



Related File Numbers:

Ordinance or Resolution Number (this item only):

SPONSORED BY: NELSON

PROPOSED BY: NELSON

INTRODUCTION DATE: 10/17/95

ORDINANCE NO. 95-056

REPEALING THE CONSERVATION FUTURES TAX

WHEREAS, in 1992 the Whatcom County Council did impose a tax upon property to be used for purchasing of conservation lands in the County; and

WHEREAS, since that time the people have made known their feelings that property taxation has reached a level that they no longer support; and

WHEREAS, there still exists a need to provide additional levels of revenue to the Current Expense Fund in order to maintain basic services; and

WHEREAS, by eliminating the existing Conservation Futures Tax an offset can be made against increased Current Expense property tax increases resulting in a net reduction in property taxes;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Whatcom County Council that Chapter 3.25 of the Whatcom County Code is amended as follows:

Chapter 3.25
CONSERVATION FUTURES PROPERTY TAX LEVY AND FUND

Sections:

- 3.25.010 Tax imposed.
- 3.25.020 Fund established.
- 3.25.030 Use of proceeds.

3.25.010 Tax imposed.

Pursuant to RCW 84.34.236, there is hereby imposed a real property tax levy to be applied against all taxable real property within Whatcom County. The levy shall be applied at a rate of six and one-quarter cents per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. ~~This tax shall expire as of midnight, December 31, 1995~~

3.25.020 Fund established.

A special revenue fund shall be established, as provided for in RCW 84.34.240, which shall be known as the conservation futures fund and to which shall be credited all taxes levied pursuant to this chapter. The executive office shall act as manager of the fund.

1 3.25.030 Use of proceeds.
2 The amounts placed in the conservation futures fund shall be used solely to acquire
3 rights and interests in open space land, farm and agricultural land, and timber land, as
4 such are defined in RCW Chapter 84.34, so as to protect, preserve, maintain, improve,
5 restore, limit the future use of, or otherwise conserve the property for public use or
6 enjoyment. No revenue generated by this tax shall be used for the acquisition of any real
7 property or interest in real property through the use of eminent domain.

8 ADOPTED this 31 day of October, 1995.

9
10 ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON

11
12 Dana Brown-Davis, Clerk of the Council

Robert A. Imhof
Robert A. Imhof, Council Chair

13 APPROVED AS TO FORM:

() Approved (x) Denied

14 Daniel J. Gibson
15 Civil Deputy Prosecutor
16

Shirley Van Zanten
Shirley Van Zanten, Executive
Date: 11-14-95

Ord. revised 11-7-95



Whatcom County Executive Office

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**Shirley Van Zanten
County Executive**

MEMO TO: Whatcom County Council

**FROM: Shirley Van Zanten
County Executive**

Shirley Van Zanten RECEIVED

DATE: November 13, 1995

NOV 15 1995

SUBJECT: Veto of Ordinance 95-056

WHATCOM COUNTY
COUNCIL

I am returning Ordinance 95-056, an ordinance eliminating the Conservation Futures Property Tax, to you with a veto.

I believe the passing of this ordinance is a precipitous and premature action. It has not given credence to the decisions of former councils nor allowed for the public to be fully and adequately involved in the review.

The Conservation Futures Levy was instituted as part of a long range plan to provide for the conservation needs of this county into the next century. This plan, the Natural Heritage Plan, was developed by a citizen task force. These citizens represented a broad spectrum of Whatcom County politically, economically and geographically. This citizen group went through an extensive public process. The Plan presented was endorsed by the County Council after this thorough needs assessment, months of public dialogue and with participation and support from a broad spectrum of the community.

I cannot concur with the Council now precipitously suspending the levy without examining needs, developing an alternative plan or attempting, in some meaningful way, to assess public opinion. I believe the current plan should remain in effect until the Council takes the time to do its homework, exposes its ideas to public scrutiny and engages in a true public process.

As a result, I have vetoed Ordinance 95-056.

SVZ:db

cc: SVZ