

**WHATCOM COUNTY**

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**Mark Personius, AICP**  
Director

## Memorandum

TO: Honorable Whatcom County Councilmembers  
Honorable Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive

THROUGH: Steve Roberge, Assistant Director, PDS

FROM: Lauren Templeton, CEP Administrator

DATE: August 23, 2023

SUBJECT: Request approval to sign an agreement with Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) in order to secure matching funds for the Jacoby Agricultural Conservation Easement through RCO Farmland Preservation grant program.

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Whatcom County Conservation Easement Program staff applied to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Farmland Preservation grant program for project 22-1322A Jacoby Agricultural Conservation Easement. The CEP is a voluntary program that compensates property owners for the value of their unused development rights and protects the land through the placement of permanent conservation easements to protect farmland for agricultural use in Whatcom County. The Jacoby application has been awarded 45 percent matching funds to contribute towards the purchase of an agricultural conservation easement on the Jacoby property. The remaining 55 percent will be funded through the Whatcom County Conservation Futures Fund and Whatcom County Density Credit Fee funds. In addition, the Jacoby Conservation Easement includes a 15.45-acre parcel zoned Designated Forest, which will be funded solely by the Conservation Futures Fund and remaining Wetland Mitigation Fee funds as the RCO Farmland Preservation grant does not include funding for Designated Forested areas.

This request is to sign a grant agreement to secure funding from RCO. It does not obligate Whatcom County to spend funds. This project will still require Council approval before an agricultural conservation easement can be completed. We will return for Council approval to acquire the easement in 2024.

### **Request Summary**

Conservation Easement Program Staff request approval for the Executive to sign the RCO Grant Agreement for project number 22-1322 (Jacoby Agricultural Conservation Easement) to receive matching funds to support the acquisition of an agricultural conservation easement on the Jacoby property. This request is to secure funding from RCO.

Please contact Conservation Easement Program Administrator Lauren Templeton at (360)778-5956 with any questions.