

# Supplemental Budget Request

Status: Pending

## Administrative Services

## Facilities Management

Suppl ID # 5197 Fund 3502 Cost Center 35021000 Originator: Rob Ney

Expenditure Type: One-Time Year 1 2025 Add'l FTE ☐ Add'l Space ☐ Priority 1

Name of Request: Justice Project Wetland Mitigation Easement Costs

X

Department Head Signature (Required on Hard Copy Submission)

Date

Costs:	Object	Object Description	Amount Requested
	6630	Professional services	\$60,000
	7320	Land	\$1,400,000
	7380	Other improvements	\$1,500,000
	Request Total		\$2,960,000

### 1a. Description of request:

This supplemental budget request would increase the spending authority in the New Health, Safety and Justice Facility Fund by \$2.95 million for wetland mitigation work related to the project.

The Facilities Management Team has been diligently working with the County's wetland biologist consultant Northwest Ecological Services for over a year to identify suitable sites for mitigation work that is necessary to allow for the filling of wetlands and associated buffers on the Justice Facility site on LaBounty Road.

Staff first explored existing County holdings, which was believed to be the least expensive option as there would be no acquisition costs. However, there are no County owned sites identified that could accommodate any sizable mitigation.

The Team then began to explore private options for mitigation. We have identified a suitable site and have a potential agreement in principle. If successful in negotiating an easement, the County can likely perform ALL of the mitigation necessary for the Justice Facility project, estimated at 80 total acres at this site. This agreement is subject to Council approval and authorization of funding.

The total cost for wetland mitigation is between \$2.7-3 million. This includes the cost of an easement, creation and enhancement work, and a sizable contingency to account for United States Army Corps of Engineers and Washington State Department of Ecology review and final approval.

The purchase of the easement is subject to Council approval. Authorizing this SBR will allow the County to proceed with the preparation of a purchase and sale agreement.

We continue to work with our consultant to assess any ongoing maintenance costs and will be working with the Executive's office to review and consider that information prior to closing. The Executive requests approval and preservation of this budget authority to exist for wetland mitigation activity, irrespective of this negotiation. It will be segmented in the project budget for wetlands mitigations specifically.

### 1b. Primary customers:

Whatcom County residents, Whatcom County Sheriff's Office, and jurisdictions utilizing the jail.

### 2. Problem to be solved:

The existing LaBounty Site is encumbered with wetlands that required mitigation in order to fill.

Monday, September 22, 2025

Rpt: Rpt Suppl Regular

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#### 3a. Options / Advantages:

Facilities Management has been searching for a suitable mitigation site for nearly a year.

We are working toward a purchase and sale agreement for a site where all mitigation can be performed on a single site, and a site that has high interest from DOE and USACE.

#### 3b. Cost savings:

Facilities Management initially provided a budget of \$3.5 million for this mitigation work.

#### 4a. Outcomes:

If funding is approved, the Facilities Management Team along with their Consultant will begin developing applications for mitigation. This is a very long permitting timeline, typically 1 year.

#### 4b. Measures:

When the permit is issued, allowing the mitigation on the proposed site.

When the mitigation plan is approved within budget.

#### 5a. Other Departments/Agencies:

It will not.

#### 5b. Name the person in charge of implementation and what they are responsible for:

Rob Ney, Facilities Director

#### 6. Funding Source:

The \$0.02 sales tax for the justice project