



Conservation Easement Program Update

Whatcom County Council
Climate Action & Natural
Resources Committee
February 20, 2024



Presentation Agenda

- Program Overview
- Recent Acquisitions
- Program Summary
- Review Ranked Applicant List
- Review Proposed Resolution to:
 - Proceed with the acquisition of one easement

Project Overview



The Conservation Easement Program (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.

A conservation easement is a voluntary, perpetual legal agreement between a landowner and the land trust/Whatcom County, in which a landowner agrees to not develop or subdivide their property to help protect the agricultural and other conservation values of the property.

The CEP is guided by an Oversight Committee composed of farmers, local citizens, and business people.

Program Overview



2002 – Whatcom County established the Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Program to protect farmland

2018 – The program expanded to also protect forestland and ecosystems as secondary goals

2021 – The program changed its name to the Conservation Easement Program



Agriculture



Forests



Ecosystems

Program Overview



**Whatcom County
Conservation Easement
Program**



Recent Acquisitions



- ▶ **Savage Agricultural Conservation Easement**
 - Removed 3 DR, Protects 40 Acres

- ▶ **VanderWerff Agricultural Conservation Easement**
 - Removed 3 DR, Protects 20 Acres

- ▶ **Vander Veen Agricultural Conservation Easement**
 - Removed 7 DR, Protects 61 Acres

Program Summary



39

**Conservation
Easements**

208

**Development
Rights Removed**

1,920

**Acres
Protected**

Farmland – 1,690 acres

Forestry – 177 acres

Ecological – 58 acres

53%

**Easement Cost
Covered by Grants**

Ranked Applicant List

February 2024

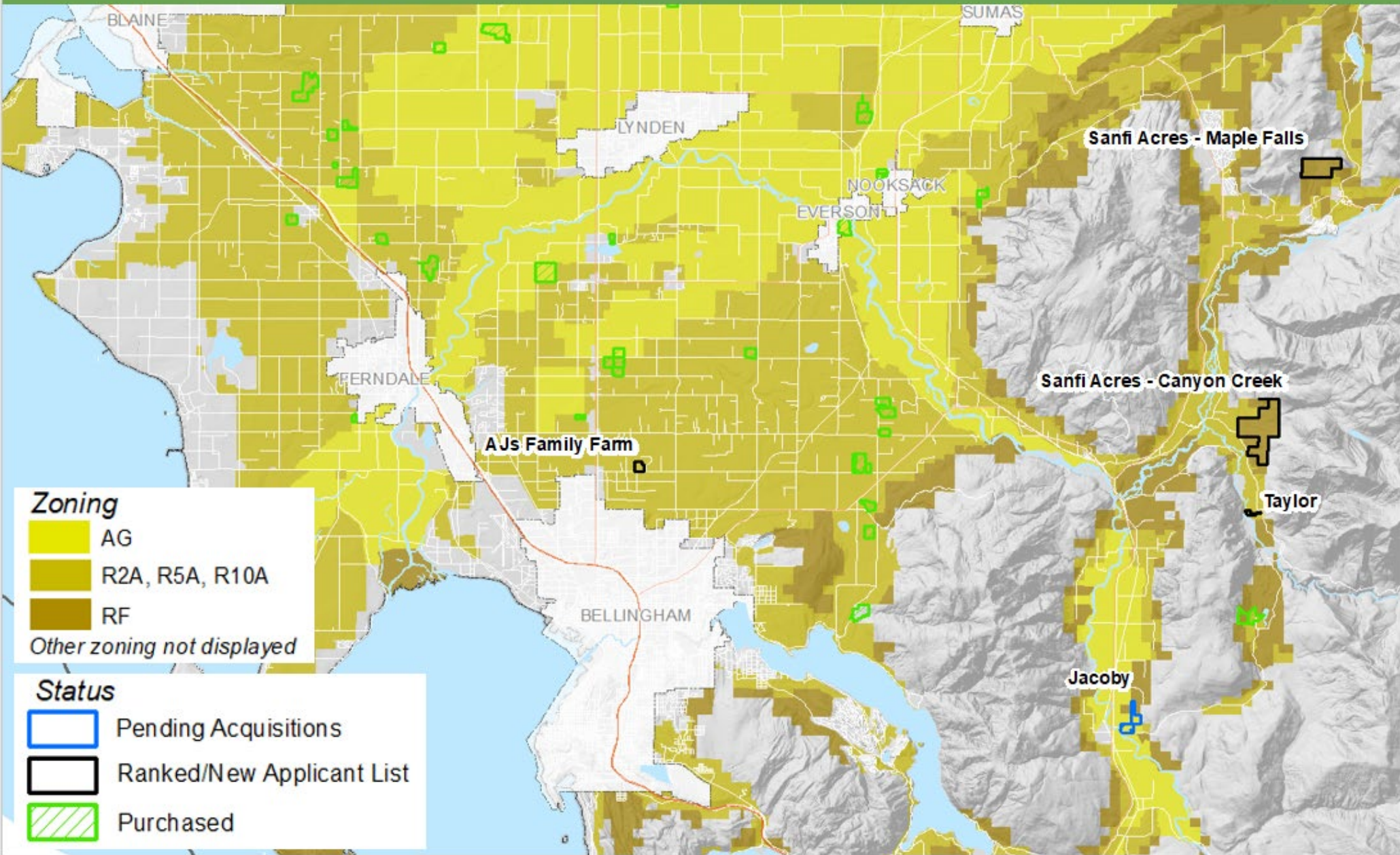


Rank	Applicant	Type	Acres	# of DRs	Zone	Final Score	Estimated Cost	Cost per DR	Cost per Acre	Match Funding	Match Funding	Purchase Year
1	Jacoby	Agricultural	100	2	AG, RF	79	\$300,000	\$150,000	\$2,999	State Funds Secured- RCO Farmland (45%)	Conservation Futures Fund (55%)	2024
2	Taylor	Ecological	15	1	R5	66	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$6,667	Pending Federal Funds	Conservation Futures Fund	2025
	AJ Family Farm	Agricultural	36	6	R5	62	\$156,000	\$26,000	\$4,333	None Secured	Conservation Futures Fund	TBD
	Sanfi Acres - Maple Falls	Forestry	262	14	RF	65	\$655,000	\$46,428	\$2,500	None Secured	Conservation Futures Fund	TBD
	Sanfi Acres - Canyon Creek	Forestry	610	30	RF	72	\$1,525,000	\$50,833	\$2,500	None Secured	Conservation Futures Fund	TBD

	Request to Purchase
	Pending Funding
	New Applications

CEP Applicant Map

February 2024



Zoning

- AG
- R2A, R5A, R10A
- RF

Other zoning not displayed

Status

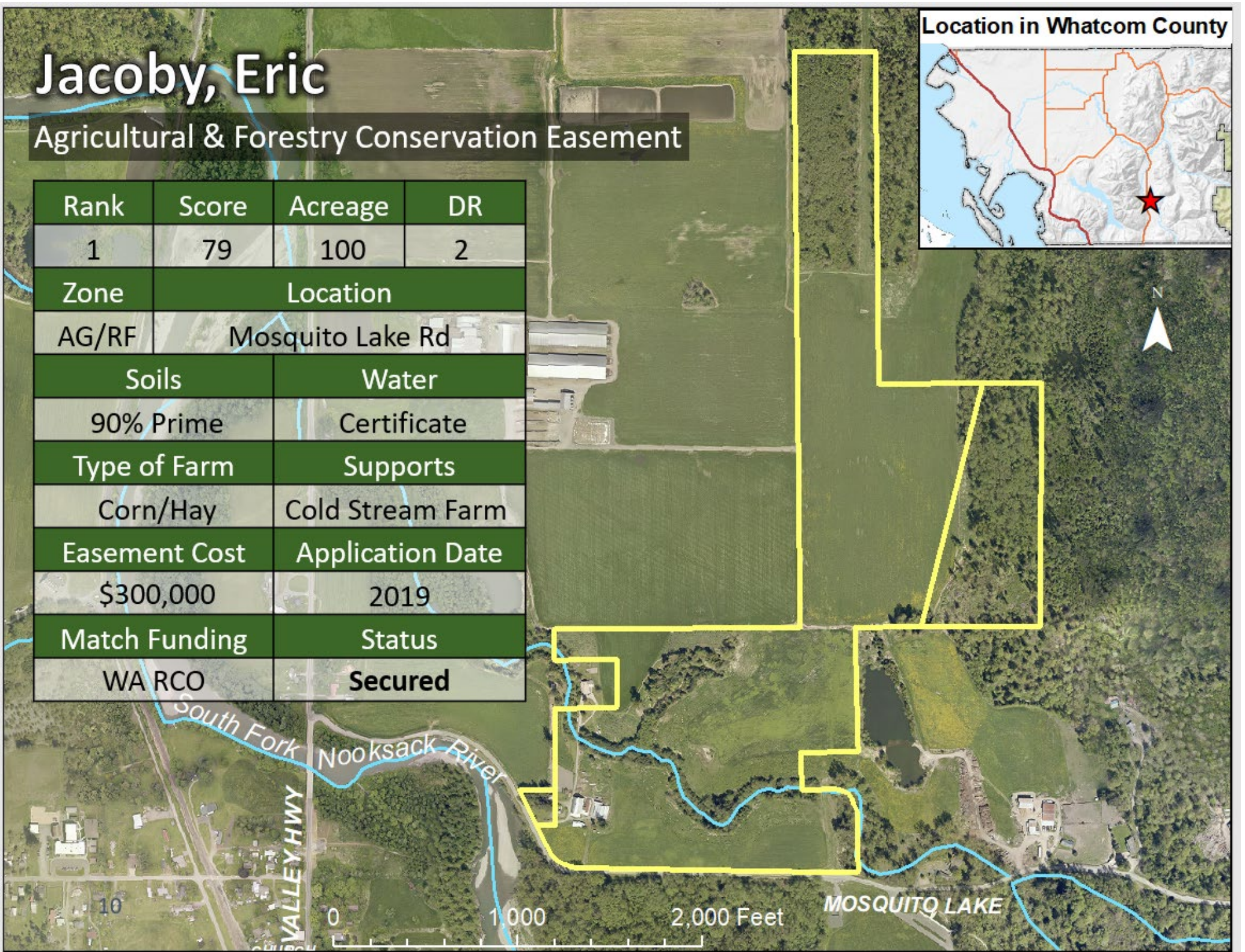
- Pending Acquisitions
- Ranked/New Applicant List
- Purchased

Jacoby, Eric

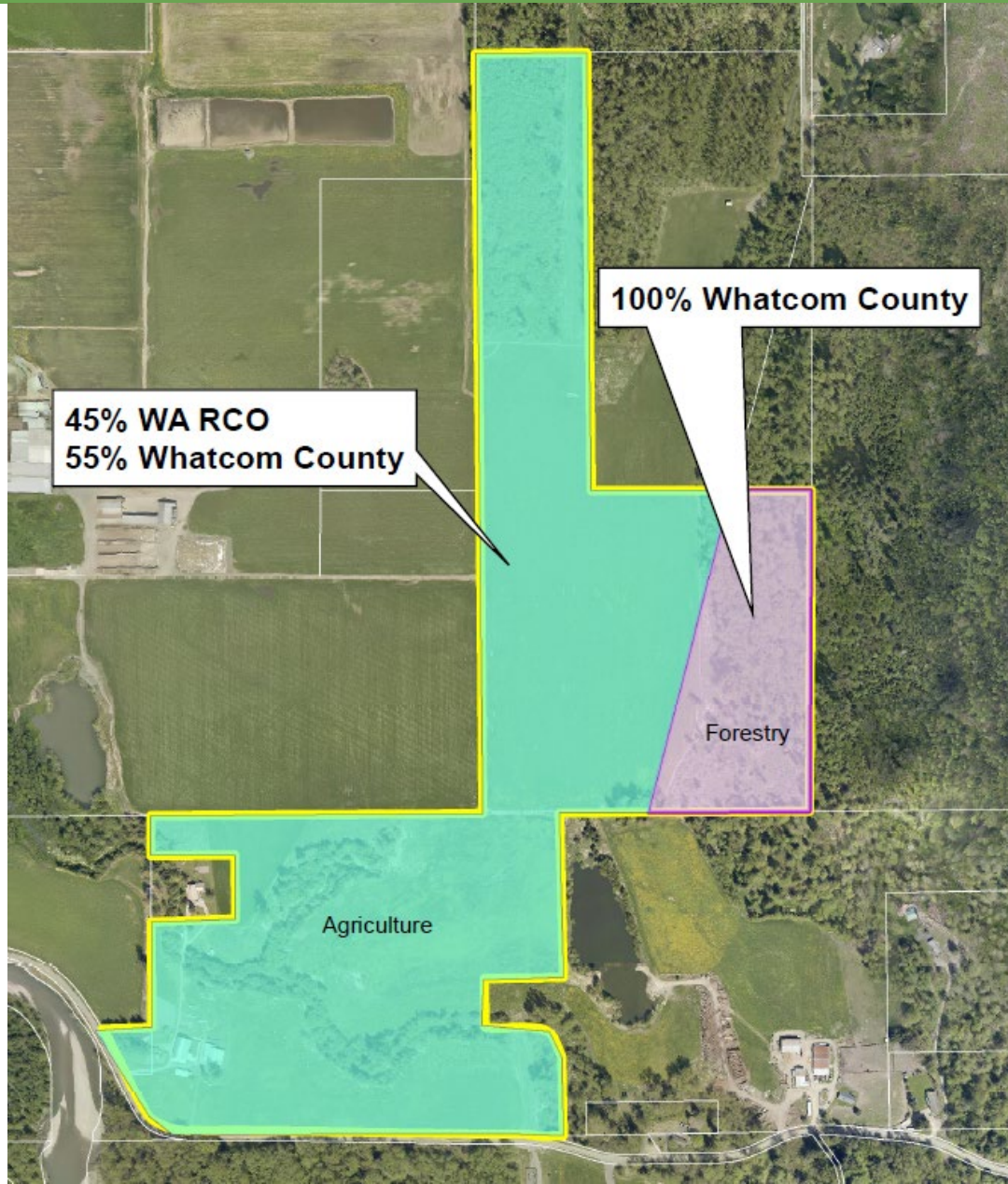
Agricultural & Forestry Conservation Easement

Rank	Score	Acreage	DR
1	79	100	2
Zone	Location		
AG/RF	Mosquito Lake Rd		
Soils		Water	
90% Prime		Certificate	
Type of Farm		Supports	
Corn/Hay		Cold Stream Farm	
Easement Cost		Application Date	
\$300,000		2019	
Match Funding		Status	
WA RCO		Secured	

Location in Whatcom County



Jacoby Funding Breakdown



Taylor, Kathy & Fuller, Melvin Jr.

Ecological Conservation Easement

Location in Whatcom County



MOSQUITO LK RD



Rank	Score	Acreage	DR
2	66	15	1
Zone	Location		
R5A	Mosquito Lk Rd		
Habitat			
Nooksack River			
Easement Cost	Application Date		
\$100,000	2020		
Match Funding	Status		
USDA	Pending Grant Funding		

*Middle Fork
Nooksack
River*

0 500 1,000 Feet

Request



▶ AB2024-140

▶ Affirm CEP Oversight Committee Ranking

Jacoby	\$300,000	100.03 ac
Agricultural Parcel	\$253,650	84.58 ac
Forestry Parcel	\$46,350	15.45 ac
Total	\$300,000	100.03 ac
Total Grant Funding	\$114,150	
Total After Grant Reimbursement	\$185,850	(\$1,858/ac)

CFF Balance as of February 2024 **\$1,144,234**

Thank you!



Whatcom County Conservation Easement Program



Conservation Easement Program Oversight Committee

Committee Members: Paul Schissler, McKale Jones, Heather MacKay-Brown, Burr Neely, Trevor Gearhart, Dave Kershner, and Alison Moon.

Program Administrator: Lauren Templeton