



# KING COUNTY FOREST CARBON PROGRAM

Kathleen Farley Wolf

King County Forestry Program

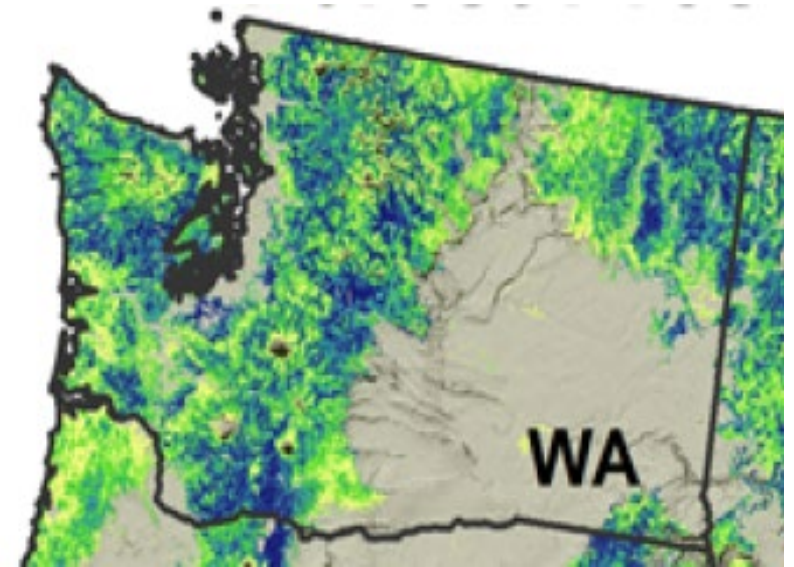
[kingcounty.gov/forestcarbon](http://kingcounty.gov/forestcarbon)

[kfarleywolf@kingcounty.gov](mailto:kfarleywolf@kingcounty.gov)

# Forest Carbon Context

Natural climate solutions for GHG mitigation

- Conservation, restoration, improved land management
- Increase carbon storage and/or avoid greenhouse gas emissions
- PNW forests = high priority
  - High carbon density
  - High biodiversity ranking



[Scientists urge creating strategic forest reserves to mitigate climate change, protect biodiversity | Oregon State University](#)

# King County Forest Carbon Program Goals



## Climate Mitigation

- Increase carbon stored in King County urban and rural forests
- Provide co-benefits: water quality/quantity, salmon habitat, air quality, recreation

## Forestland Conservation

- Support Land Conservation Initiative (to accelerate protection)
- Reinvest funds in additional forested acquisitions

## Conservation Partnerships

- Engage the business community in conservation (sale of credits to companies voluntarily meeting carbon neutrality goals)
- Potentially replicable model
- Provide or seek out opportunities for private forest landowners to participate in forest carbon

# Forest Carbon Projects

## Forest carbon project types

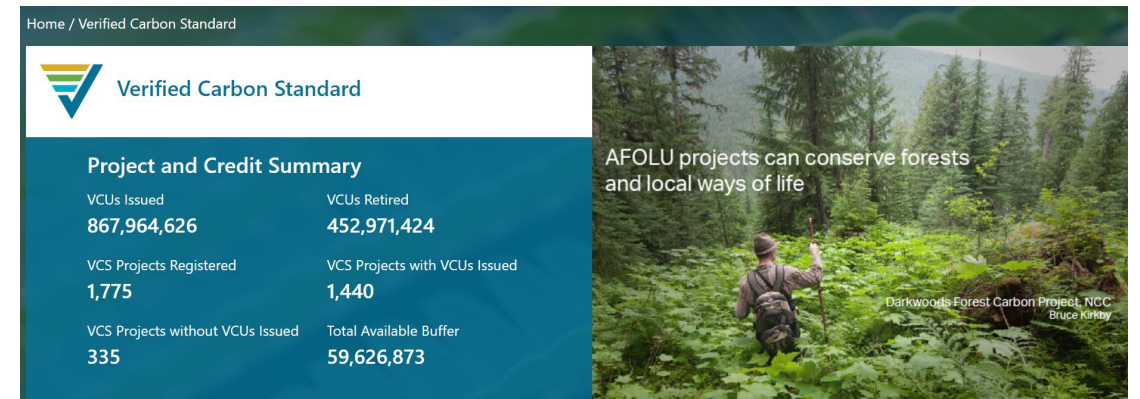
- Avoided Conversion (AC)
- Improved Forest Management (IFM)
- Afforestation/Reforestation (ARR)

## Compliance or Voluntary


- Compliance:
  - CA (CARB, 2013), WA (Dept. of Ecology, 2023)
  - 100 years
- Voluntary:
  - VCS/Verra, ACR, CAR, CFC
  - 30-100 years

## Forest carbon project key attributes

- Verifiable (3<sup>rd</sup> party)
- Permanent
- Additional
- Non-leakage



Home / Verified Carbon Standard

 Verified Carbon Standard

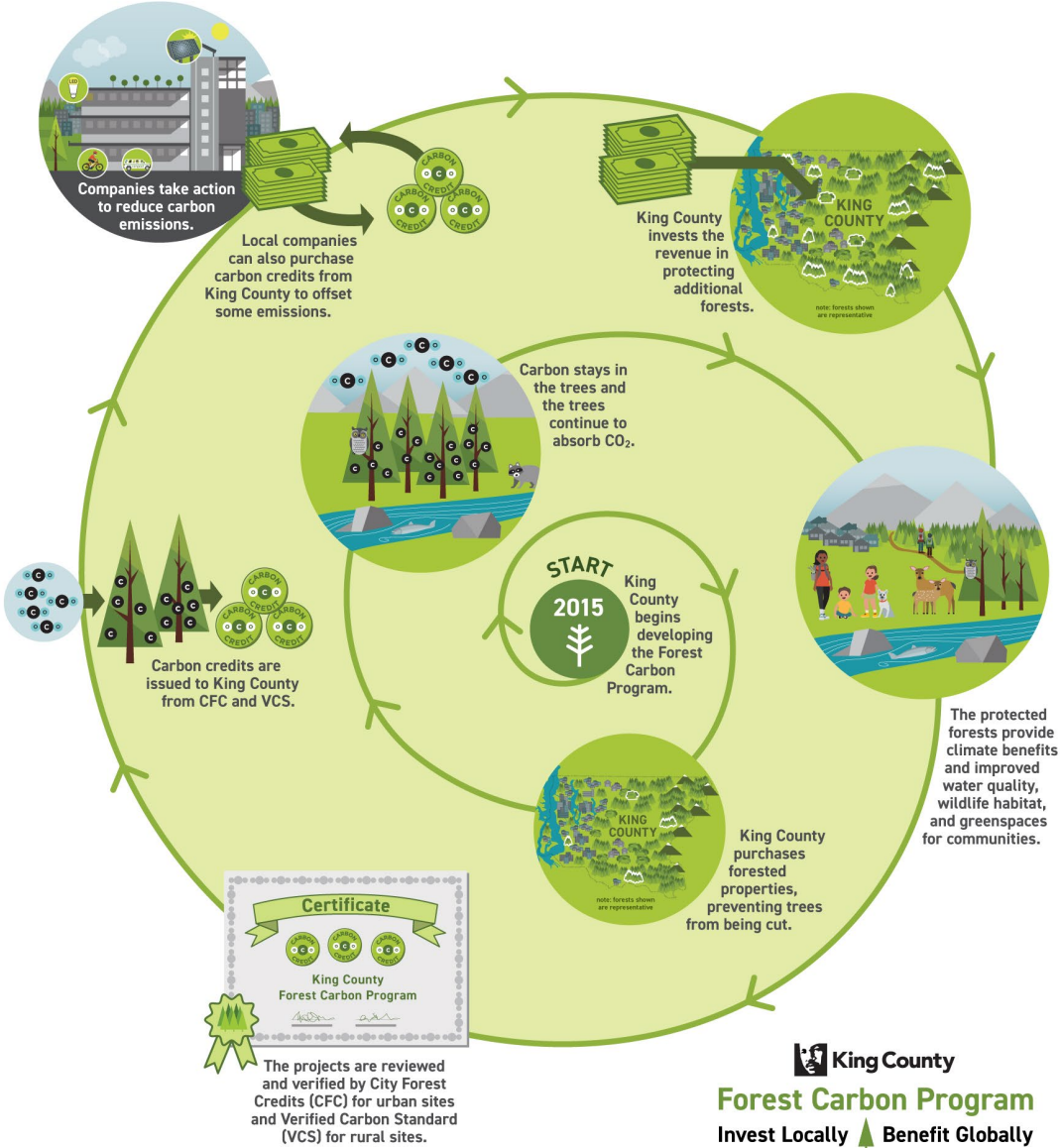
**Project and Credit Summary**

VCUs Issued	867,964,626	VCUs Retired	452,971,424
VCS Projects Registered	1,775	VCS Projects with VCUs Issued	1,440
VCS Projects without VCUs Issued	335	Total Available Buffer	59,626,873

AFOLU projects can conserve forests and local ways of life

Darkwoods Forest Carbon Project, NCC  
Bruce Kirkby

# HOW KING COUNTY'S FOREST CARBON PROGRAM WORKS



**King County**  
**Forest Carbon Program**  
Invest Locally ▲ Benefit Globally

# VCS Rural Forest Carbon Project

Registry: Verra (VCS/Verified Carbon Standard)

- Improved Forest Management (IFM) methodology
- 100-year commitment
- Long process to create a project

King County acquisitions

- Grouped project: ~900 aggregated acres initially + new properties added every ~2 years
- Mechanism for private forest landowners to participate but not yet open

3<sup>rd</sup> party audit: validate once; verify at least every 5 yrs

- Validation & 1<sup>st</sup> verification completed fall 2020
- 2<sup>nd</sup> verification almost complete

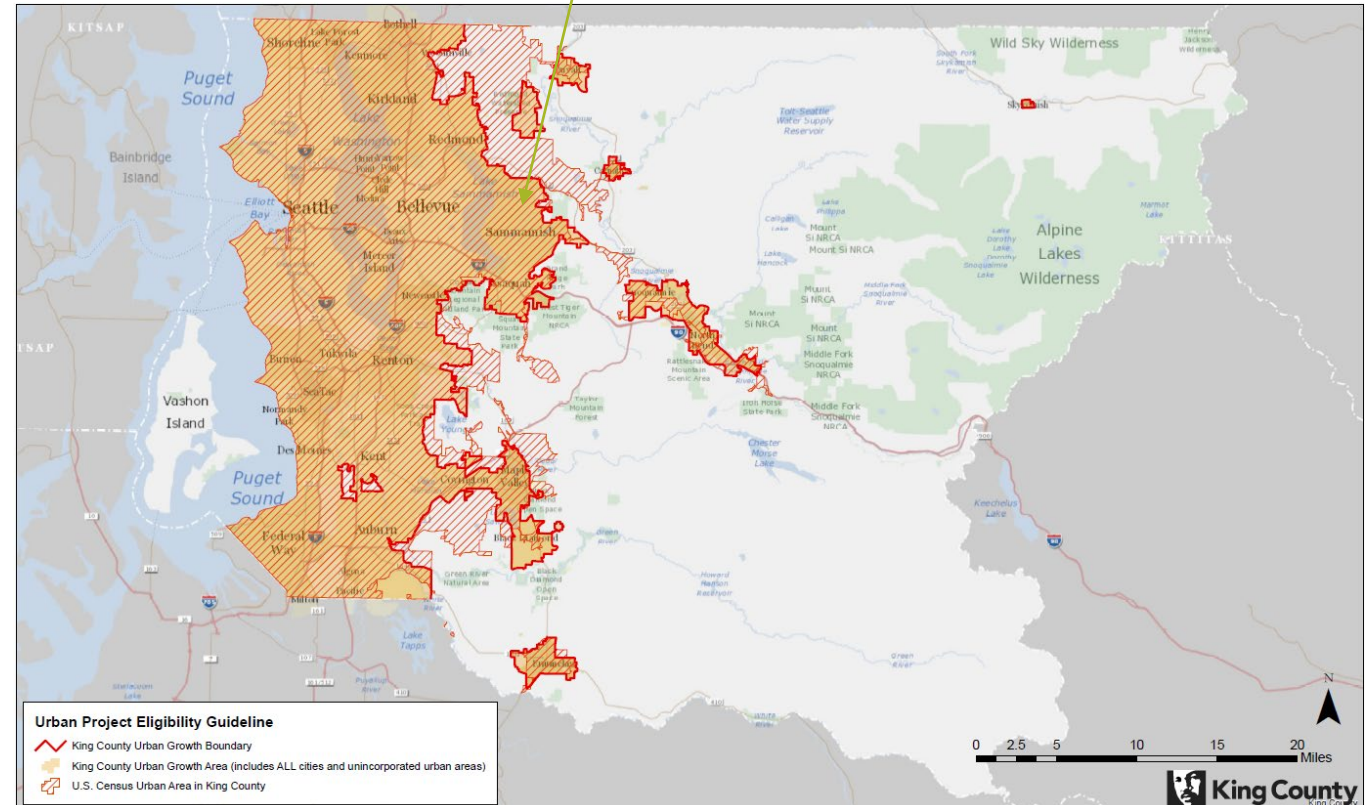
Sales

- First batch: Microsoft (via Natural Capital Partners)
- Second batch: in progress



# Urban Forest Carbon Project

- Registry: City Forest Credits
  - Tree Preservation Protocol (Avoided Conversion)
  - 100-year commitment
  - Low overhead for project development
- King County acquisitions
  - Pilot project (15 acres)
  - Possible additional projects (+ discussions with cities)
  - (+ evaluating use of the Tree Planting Protocol)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> party audit
  - Verified in Dec 2018
  - Monitoring every 3 years
- Sales
  - Mostly small batches direct to buyers





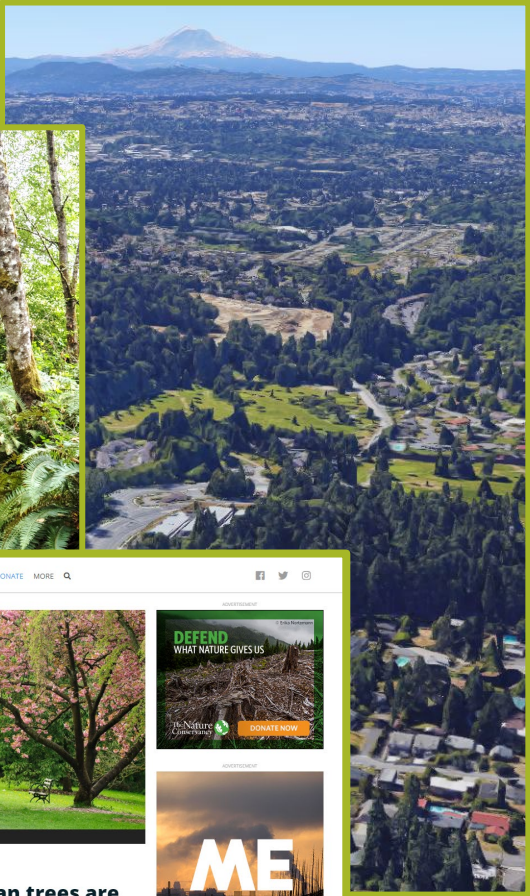
# Forest Carbon Challenges & Opportunities

## Challenges

- Time and cost to conduct feasibility and set up projects (VCS)
- Uncertainty in timing, especially 3<sup>rd</sup> party audit
- Uncertainty in pipeline of properties from year to year – best for active, ongoing acquisition
- Staff needed for ongoing monitoring and verification – project management, field inventory, carbon modeling
  - Sales can also be time-consuming but we have learned about range of options

## Opportunities

- Support forest conservation for climate mitigation
- New funding source to support additional forest acquisition & conservation
- High demand for forest carbon credits
  - Prices increasing
  - Local companies interested in local credits
- New methodologies coming out, more opportunities to use remotely sensed data, bring down costs
- Climate Commitment Act will create offset market – details not yet known



# FOREST CARBON PROGRAM

*Invest locally,  
benefit globally*



So many things we  
can't do anything about,  
OUR TREE CANOPY WE CAN.



Without a dramatic acceleration of conservation work alongside development, we will lose forever much of what makes this region beautiful, ecologically healthy, and livable.



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Washington Park Arboretum in Seattle. Greg Tughe / AP Photo / USAP via Getty Images

CLIMATE DESK

### Carbon offsets for urban trees are on the horizon

By Maria Dolan on Aug 31, 2019

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The evidence is in: Urban trees improve air and water quality, reduce energy costs, and improve human health, even as they offer the benefit of storing carbon. And in cities across the country, they are disappearing.

A recent paper by two U.S. Forest Service scientists reported that metropolitan areas in the U.S. are losing about 36 million trees each year. The paper, by David Nowak and Eric Greenfield, was an expansion of the same researchers' 2013 study.

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