

KITTITAS COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

AGENDA STAFF REPORT

AGENDA DATE: August 3, 2010

ACTION REQUESTED: Authorize the submission of a grant application to WWRP/RCO for conservation purchase of property in Kittitas County

BACKGROUND: Two adjacent landowners along Robinson Canyon west of Ellensburg have joined together with an interest to conserve their land as working farmland. A total of 88 acres of excellent farmland are available for permanent conservation and Kittitas County and the Cascade Land Conservancy have been asked to assist the landowners with their conservation goals. A local and very successful organic seed producer, Irish Eyes Garden Seeds, has also been brought into the conservation partnership as the current lessee of the properties and the future fee-title owner. Irish Eyes is an organic seed producer that currently works over 170 acres of discontiguous properties in the Kittitas Valley. The company is interested in consolidating their operations in order to save on management costs and has formed a relationship with the 2 landowners to bring this project to a successful outcome. Cascade Land Conservancy has been asked to negotiate the complicated transaction, to purchase conservation easements on the two farms which would then allow Irish Eyes to purchase the underlying fee-title to the properties in subsequent private transactions

INTERACTION: Public Works/CDS

RECOMMENDATION:

Motion to approve

HANDLING:

Return to Public Works/CDS

ATTACHMENTS:

Resolution

LEAD STAFF:

Kirk Holmes
Director of Public Works