



Washington Native Plant Society

Appreciate, Conserve, and Study Our Native Flora

6310 NE 74th Street, Suite 215E, Seattle, WA 98115
(206) 527-3210

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Forterra
901 5th Ave Ste. 2200
Seattle, WA 98164
info@forterra.org

CC: Dow Constantine, King County Executive kcexec@kingcounty.gov
Regan Dunn, King County Council reagan.dunn@kingcounty.gov
Denis Law, Mayor of Renton dlaw@rentonwa.gov
Allen Dauterman, Mayor of Newcastle allend@newcastlewa.gov
SaveDeLeoWall.org SaveDeLeoWall@gmail.com
Steve Williams SWilliams453@yahoo.com

Re: Support for nonprofit acquisition of a 28-acre parcel on the southern slopes of Cougar Mountain currently approved for forest harvest by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (Forest Practices Application 2420111).

Dear Friends of the Environment,

Conserving intact native plant habitats for their intrinsic ecologic function and value is of highest priority to the Washington Native Plant Society. This includes preserving forested lands that provide native plant habitat near urban areas that are appreciated for their recreational and educational value.

Currently a 28 acre parcel on the southern slopes of Cougar Mountain has received DNR permit for timber harvest. This area is home to native plant forest habitat and is close to recreational areas used by the many inhabitants of the Puget Sound Basin including Seattle and its suburbs. Local governments, citizens groups, and our members have expressed strong opposition to this timber harvest.

The proposed project is close to the De Leo Wall, a popular hiking destination on the south side of Cougar Mountain. The even-aged harvest area is home to native plant species including phantom orchids (*Cephalanthera austiniiae*) and chocolate lilies (*Fritillaria camschatcensis*). According to WNPS records Cougar Mountain is known to support at least 114 native vascular plant species (see attachment). Harvest of the forest will destroy the habitat that supports these species.



The Washington Native Plant Society strongly supports efforts to preserve the forest within parcels 352405-9010 and 022305-9022 in the May Creek Basin of King County.

We endorse your activities and we wish your organization success in procuring these properties in order to preserve undisturbed native plant habitat and public access to this land.

Sincerely,



Dan Paquette, Chair, Central Puget Sound
Chapter



Rebecca Chaney, Conservation Chair
Washington Native Plant Society