

**FINDINGS OF FACT
PIERCE COUNTY COUNCIL**

1. The Pierce County Council finds that RCW 89.08.400 authorizes county legislative authorities to impose special assessments for conservation districts to fund activities and programs to conserve natural resources.
2. The Pierce County Council finds that the Pierce Conservation District (District) is a governmental subdivision of the State of Washington, organized under RCW 89.08 to protect and conserve natural resources throughout Pierce County and member cities.
3. The Pierce County Council finds that Pierce County is required to plan for and implement programs and projects in response to federal and State mandates relative to the protection and enhancement of natural resources, including the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA).
4. The Pierce County Council finds that in cooperation with the Cities of Fircrest, Lakewood, Milton, Puyallup, Steilacoom, Sumner, Tacoma and University Place, and Pierce County, the Conservation District developed a special assessment proposal pursuant to RCW 89.08.400 to provide basic funding for District activities benefiting landowners within unincorporated Pierce County and the aforementioned municipalities and conserving natural resources.
5. The Pierce County Council finds that the revenue from the special assessments will allow the District to work in partnership with the County and participating cities and towns to obtain grant funding and support local governments address requirements of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), the Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of salmon species, and other natural resource protection requirements and needs, such as the protection and conservation of farm lands.
6. The Pierce County Council finds that the Board of Supervisors of the Pierce Conservation District passed Resolution #05-11-06-1, submitting a proposed system of assessments for collection 2007 through 2016 to the Pierce County Council on July 31, 2006.
7. The Pierce County Council finds that, in accordance with RCW 89.08.400(2), the District conducted a public hearing on the proposal prior to August 1, 2006.
8. The Pierce County Council finds that the District's proposal includes a \$5.00 per parcel annual assessment for eligible properties and a 3-year spending plan for activities that will benefit the participating cities and towns and unincorporated Pierce County.

9. The Pierce County Council finds that programs supported by the District's special assessment will help the County address policies in the County's Comprehensive Plan regarding the protection and conservation of agriculture and protection of important fish habitat.
10. The Pierce County Council finds that the projects and program activities in the proposed spending plan conserve natural resources and are of special benefit to lands in the County and participating cities and towns.
11. The Pierce County Council finds that the lands receiving the benefits from the spending plan projects and program activities are all lands located within unincorporated Pierce County and the Cities of Fircrest, Lakewood, Milton, Tacoma, Steilacoom, Sumner, and University Place, except those classified by the Assessor-Treasurer in current use assessment as Forest or Timber lands, saltwater tidelands, and tax-exempt lands.
12. The Pierce County Council finds that an assessment roll has been prepared by the Conservation District in cooperation with the Assessor-Treasurer.
13. The Pierce County Council finds that the proposed Interlocal Agreement provides the safeguards needed to ensure that the funds are being expended as planned.
14. The Pierce County Council finds that the interest of the public good is protected with the three year time limitation and the detailed Interlocal Agreement.
15. The Pierce County Council finds that the notice provisions of RCW 89.08.400(2) were met through posting the notice in five locations, and publishing notice of the public hearing in The News Tribune for two consecutive weeks at least five days prior to the hearing.
16. The Pierce County Council finds that public hearings were held by the Council's Committee of the Whole and the County Council, with a final hearing date of November 21, 2006.