

Executive Summary

Preparing for the Future

King County has embarked on a program called the Regional Wastewater Services Plan (RWSP) designed to address the region's long-term wastewater treatment needs. The County's regional wastewater collection and treatment system currently serves over one million customers in King and Snohomish counties. Rapid population growth is placing increasing demands on the system, particularly in north King and south Snohomish Counties. By 2010, King County's wastewater treatment system will have reached its capacity limits.

To ensure that quality wastewater services are in place to protect public health and the environment, including threatened and endangered species, the RWSP calls for constructing a new wastewater treatment facility by 2010 to accommodate growth in the north service area. In late 1999, King County began a three-year search for a site for the new Brightwater Treatment Plant. The name Brightwater reflects the project's goals of protecting public health and the environment, being a good neighbor and being a good investment for the region.

King County assembled a comprehensive, interdisciplinary Project Team to implement a three-phase approach to site the Brightwater Treatment Plant and its associated conveyance pipelines and marine outfall. The first two phases of the siting process use policy criteria and preliminary information gathered to help define the specific proposal and alternatives which will be studied in greater detail in the third phase and in a detailed supplemental environmental impact statement. Phase I of the siting process is summarized in this document. Lasting from November 1999 to May 2001, Phase I includes developing criteria, identifying potential land areas and selecting candidate sites for further analysis. Future phases will include more detailed review and an environmental analysis of the final candidate sites.

Working Together to Site Brightwater

Because the area to be served by the Brightwater plant includes portions of King and Snohomish Counties, King County Executive Ron Sims and Snohomish County Executive Bob Drewel agreed to work together on the siting process. The two Executives created a 24-member Siting Advisory Committee to help develop site screening criteria and provide project oversight. Committee members were drawn from all sectors of the community in both counties, including tribal governments, city and state governments, utility districts, business, and environmental advocacy organizations. In addition to the advisory committee, a technical committee, the Metropolitan Water Pollution Abatement Advisory Committee and a policy committee, the Regional Water Quality Committee, reviewed and helped shape

the process.

Public involvement and community partnerships are critical to the success of the project. Brightwater's Public Involvement Plan was created to promote open communication with interested and affected community members, and to encourage their participation in the siting process. Interactive projects included a website, a speakers bureau, newsletters, mail-in feedback cards, public displays, workshops for the public and stakeholders, technical review, and media outreach.

Creating Policy Site Screening Criteria

The Project Team began by developing policy site screening criteria that would be used to select the best candidate sites. First, the Project Team developed a set of project goals to guide the process. Then, based on public comments, the Project Team developed draft policy criteria. These were refined by the advisory, policy and technical committees. Finally, the King County Executive forwarded the set of policy site screening criteria to the King County Council. The Council reviewed and revised the policy site screening criteria, and adopted them in February, 2001 in Ordinance 14043.

Searching for Sites

While the policy criteria were being developed, refined and approved, the Project Team also worked to identify land areas that might be suitable for the new facilities. 95 areas were identified using existing documentation such as the Geographic Information System (GIS), an industrial/commercial lands search, and community nominations. Five areas were nominated by community members and organizations through the Community Nominations Process, which took place in the summer of 2000.

Next, the 95 land areas were analyzed for serious engineering and environmental constraints that would limit the construction or operation of a wastewater treatment facility. Such constraints include steep slopes, long and narrow site shape, presence of developed national or state parks, active airport operations, landslides or unstable soils, flood zones, transmission towers, major pipelines, cemeteries, biological preserves or conservation areas, and unremediated Superfund sites. This analysis revealed that approximately 38 of the 95 land areas were largely unconstrained.

Applying Policy Screening Criteria

In order to apply the adopted Policy Site Screening Criteria systematically, the Project Team developed a set of Detailed Evaluation Questions, measurable questions that help evaluate how well a site meets the policy criteria. In Phase I, this included considerations such as site

elevation, documented wetlands, and existing land use. Data sources for this level of site evaluation included published materials such as aerial photos, land use maps and plans, topographic maps, and publicly available resource databases, and “windshield surveys.”

Based on the experience and professional judgement, of the Project Team and the data available at this stage, certain questions became key distinguishing siting factors, such as site size, estimated length of pipes to and from the site, and existing land use. These were given more emphasis at this stage in the evaluation and were used to preliminarily determine the most suitable candidate sites overall.

The Project Team applied the detailed evaluation questions, including key factors, for the approximately 38 sites. Using this evaluation process, the King and Snohomish County Executives selected seven proposed candidate sites (see Figure 1). The sites that are approved by the King County Council will continue to be evaluated in greater detail in the next phase of the siting process.

**Table 1
Proposed Candidate Sites**

Site Name	Site No.*	Total Area (acres)	Estimated Useable Area (acres)	Jurisdiction	Current Land Use
Edmonds Unocal	IND1/71	53	43	City of Edmonds, Snohomish Co.	Unocal operations; Inactive Tank Farm
Point Wells	30/CN5	98	29	Unincorporated Snohomish Co.	Chevron Asphalt Plant
Gun Range	33/CN1	80	80	Unincorporated Snohomish Co.	Kenmore Gun Range
Gravel Quarry	17	69	68	City of Bothell & Unincorporated Snohomish Co.	Gravel Quarry and Undeveloped Land
Thrashers Corner	19/25	144	63	City of Bothell, Snohomish Co.	Low Density Residential & Open Space
Route 9	IND9/64	108	104	Unincorporated Snohomish Co.	Numerous Businesses - Light Industrial
Woodinville	15	44	44	City of Woodinville, King County	Undeveloped – Residential Proposed

* Site number designations were developed as part of the lands area inventory. “IND” indicates its current use as an industrial site. “CN” indicates that the site was submitted as part of the community nominations process.

Investigating North Puget Sound and Its Shoreline

As part of the preliminary site evaluation process, the Marine Outfall Siting Study (“MOSS”) was created to investigate the physical and biological conditions of the northern

basin of Puget Sound in order to identify a suitable site for the marine outfall for the Brightwater Facility.

Thus far, the MOSS team has compiled geographic information obtained from primary research and determined the presence of underwater geophysical constraints (such as steep slopes, submarine canyons, ridges, slides, and substrate unsuitable for tunneling). It has also examined nearshore biological, shoreline public use, and hazardous materials constraints.

Eight potential outfall zones were identified at this preliminary stage (see Figure 2). These will undergo further analysis based on more detailed information.

Next Steps

There is lots of work ahead. After the candidate sites have been adopted by the County Council, work will continue to:

- Define conveyance pipeline corridors and methods of construction;
- Refine marine outfall zones;
- Assemble system packages (plant layout, conveyance, and outfall);
- Gather more detailed information on each site and conduct on-site investigations; and
- Seek input from the public, local communities and agencies regarding the candidate sites.

Once the final candidate sites are identified, a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared and reviewed by the public. Finally, the King County Executive will select the Brightwater system location.

Decision Timeline:

March 27, 2001	King and Snohomish County Executives announce seven Proposed Candidate Sites .
SPRING 2001	The King County Council will adopt Candidate Sites and Site Selection Criteria that will take us through the next round of more detailed analysis.
SUMMER 2001	Systems (including conveyance and outfall) will be developed for each candidate site. These systems will be analyzed using the adopted site selection criteria.
FALL 2001	The King County and Snohomish County Executives will announce two to five Proposed Final Candidate Systems .
END OF 2001	Based on the adopted criteria, the King County Council will then select and approve two to five Final Candidate Systems .
2002	Extensive Environmental Review will be done for the final candidate systems, including the conveyance routes and marine outfall.
EARLY 2003	The King County Executive will Select a Site for the Brightwater Treatment Plant, as well as a proposed conveyance system and marine outfall location.

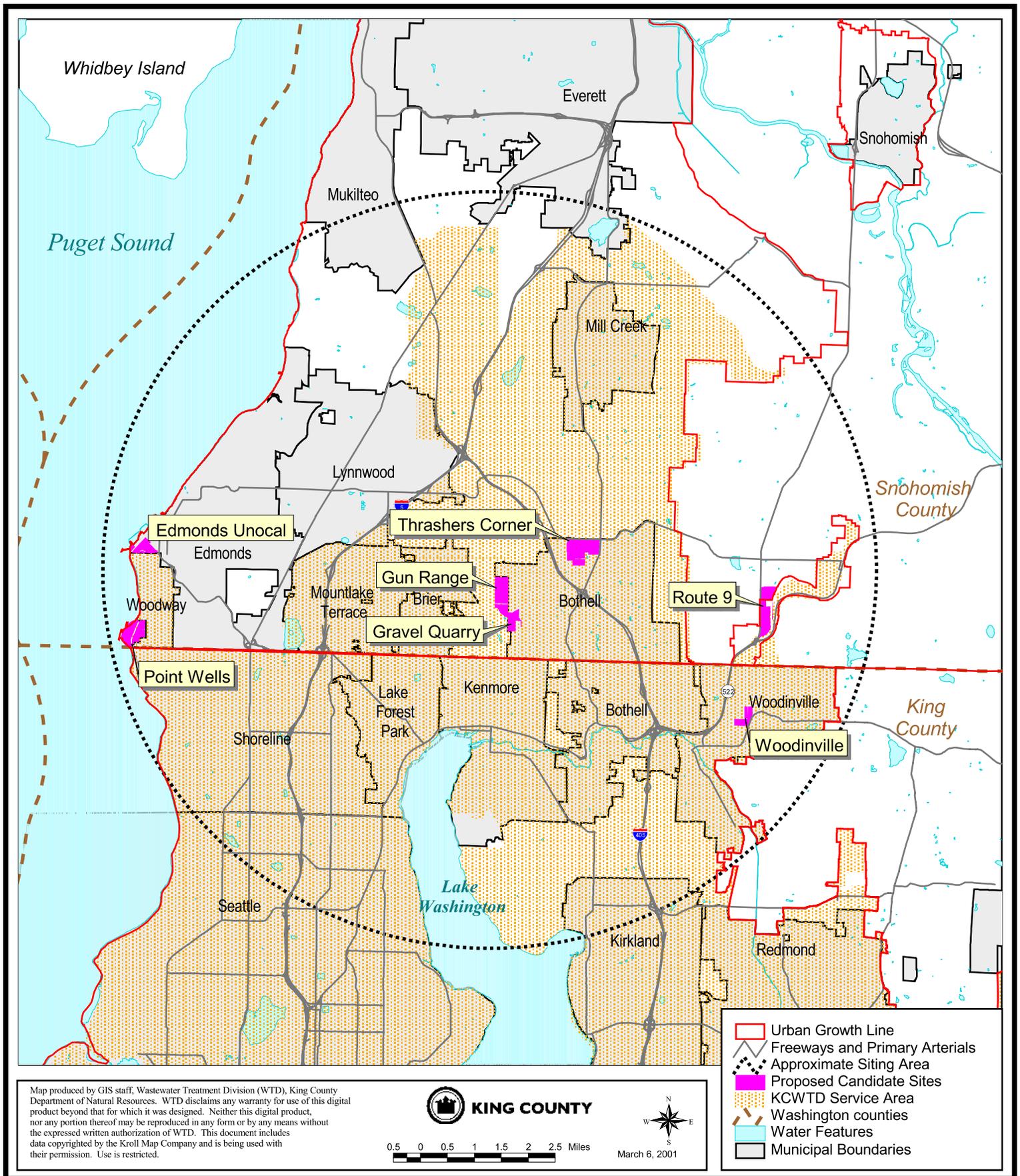


Fig. 1 Proposed Candidate Sites

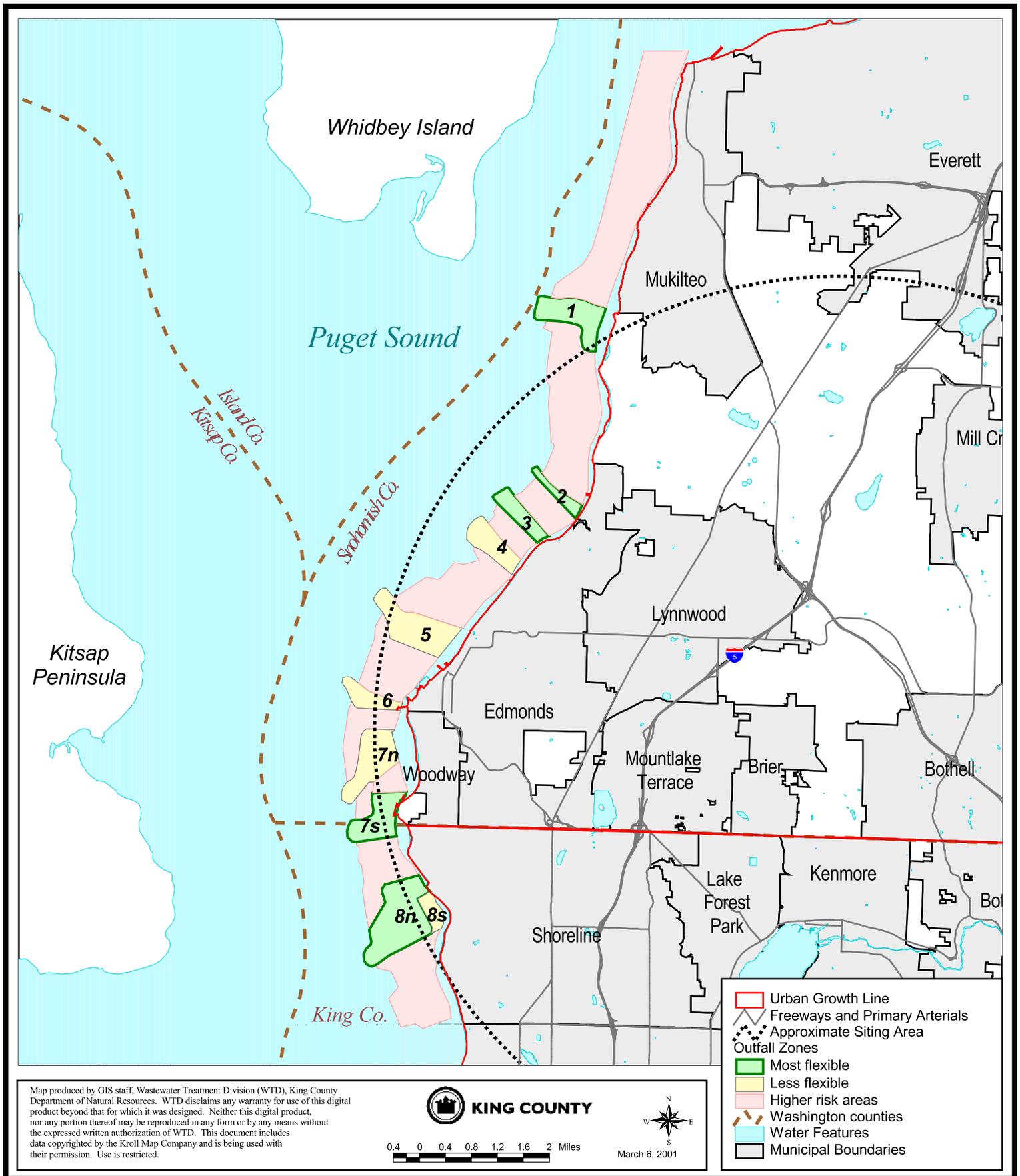


Fig. 2 Proposed Outfall Zones