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## **Forterra and Snohomish County Finalize Curtis Acquisition for Whitehorse Trail**

**EVERETT, Snohomish County, October 12, 2016**—Forterra and Snohomish County have acquired a 33-acre forested property near Darrington, WA as part of the 27-mile Whitehorse Trail. The property sale closed on September 16, 2016. The property will be held by Snohomish County as undeveloped park property.

“Forterra is proud to partner with Snohomish County on the conservation of this site. This was a rare and unique opportunity to secure a permanent forested buffer alongside the Whitehorse Trail, and expand recreational uses for the community,” said Gene Duvernoy, Forterra President.

The Curtis family owned the property for over 70 years and hoped it could be conserved as a community asset. Home to a mature forest, the property hasn’t been logged since the 1950s and provides habitat that is increasingly rare in the area. Threatened Chinook Salmon and Bull Trout depend on the North Fork of the Stillaguamish River, which passes through the northern part of the property.

“We are thrilled to add this property to the Whitehorse Trail,” said Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive. “The more woodlands we can protect and preserve along our recreational corridors, the more people will visit Snohomish County, bringing much needed economic support to our rural communities. Our partnership with Forterra means this beautiful property will be available for many generations to come.”

The Whitehorse Trail stretches through the Stillaguamish River Valley, frequently paralleling State Route 530 and the North Fork Stillaguamish River, and winds through farms and forests with views of the Cascade Mountains, including Whitehorse Mountain, Mount Higgins, and Prairie Mountain. The Curtis property straddles approximately 1,700 lineal feet of the Trail and is part of the 7-mile eastern stretch that is currently open to the public for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

Citizens from across the region and the immediate area – particularly the Oso and Darrington communities –enjoy the Whitehorse Trail, and as additional sections open to the public there will be more demand for scenic stretches and multiple recreational uses along the way. County Parks envisions multiple future uses for the property including hiking through the second-growth multi-story forest,

bird-watching for the pileated woodpeckers among the numerous old snags, river access, and picnic tables and benches for weary travelers to rest their feet.

On February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2013 the Snohomish County Council approved \$250,000, by Motion 13-048, for this property acquisition through the Conservation Futures Program (CFP). An additional \$60,000 from CFP was allocated in 2016 to address property value increases and acquisition costs for a total purchase price of \$310,000. The acquisition of the property was successful due to a partnership between Forterra, a nonprofit that secures the keystone places for regional sustainability, and Snohomish County. Forterra initiated and negotiated the property purchase and worked closely with the family throughout the process, and Snohomish County completed the acquisition.

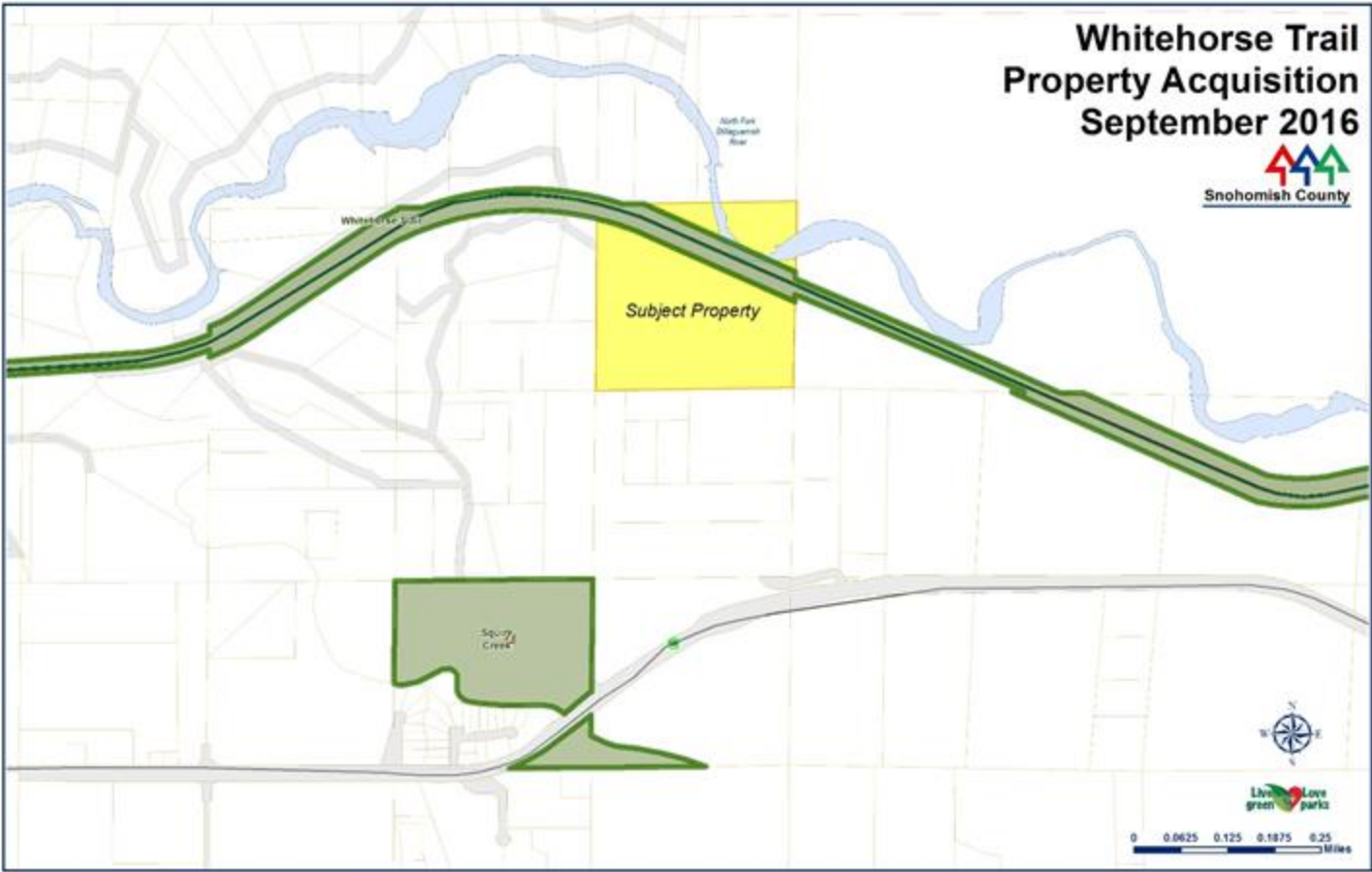
#### ABOUT FORTERRA

A nonprofit, Forterra secures and cares for the keystone places — wild, rural and urban — that are critical to a sustainable future for the Pacific Northwest. Over its 25-year history Forterra has completed more than 400 land transactions encompassing 250,000 acres with more than \$500 million in value.



A part of the Whitehorse Trail. Photo credit: Charlie Raines, Forterra

Map of Property:



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