



Thumbs Up: Funding Request

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The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition will be back before the Legislature in January requesting \$100 million to continue meeting the growing demand for creating new parks and for protecting wildlife habitat and farmland.

This is an outstanding program, but the economy has turned.

It will be a challenge to get additional funding at a time when lawmakers are struggling to make budget cuts.

But again, this is a terrific program because it sets aside property for wildlife habitat and recreation that will benefit generations of Washington residents.

"Washington has a unique and wonderful quality of life that is enriched by our parks, trails, recreational areas, wildlife habitat, farmlands, beaches and rivers," said Michael Collins, board president.

"The (coalition) is a brilliant program that is helping ensure our present quality of life and creating a lasting legacy of nature and the outdoors for our children, even as our state grows and welcomes more new residents."

All eyes are on Gov. Chris Gregoire to see whether she will take the first step and include the \$100 million in her budget request to the Legislature later this fall.