

## Big Finn Hill Park: Cottonwood Tree Removal FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



*1. Why is King County Parks removing trees from Big Finn Hill Park?*

The 12 cottonwood trees identified for removal pose safety hazards and have caused ongoing maintenance problems to the baseball fields.

The specific cottonwood trees were selected for removal based upon the impact their root systems have on the baseball fields and safety concerns related to their proximity to the outfields. These trees were not planted as part of the original construction of the ballfields in the 1980s, but grew in these locations on their own in what is known as “volunteer recruitment”.

*2. How was this decision made and what alternatives were considered?*

This decision was made after several years of monitoring tree root growth and repairing damage caused by the tree roots to baseball fields’ drainage system. As a maintenance issue, the decision was made by King County Parks staff based upon recommendations from a staff Engineer and a staff Arborist. Due to safety concerns and ongoing damage, no alternatives were considered.

*3. Where are the specific trees located?*

The trees are located along a 1,100 foot-long wooded area near baseball fields #1 and #2. See attached map for specific location.

*4. Who/how will the work be done?*

King County Parks will hire a contractor to perform the tree removal. Specially trained King County Parks staff will inject an herbicide into the stumps in order to prevent future growth of new cottonwood trees. Habitat snags will be left, per the permit conditions.

*5. When will the work be done and how long will it take?*

We anticipate this project to occur in August 2018, but no work has yet been planned

*6. What should park visitors expect during the project?*

The tree removal project will likely require a few large trucks moving in and out of the park, along with the use of chippers and chainsaws. The baseball fields will be closed for safety during this time. Work hours will be determined once a contractor is identified; typically this type of work commences at 7 a.m.

*7. Will the trees be replaced?*

Yes. King County Parks will replace the trees with at least 12 native species, which is also a requirement of the tree removal permit issued by the City of Kirkland. Replacement locations will be decided by park operations staff in consultation with neighbors and other park visitors.

*8. What will the new trees be like and how will you ensure their survival?*

The trees will be native species, such as Western Red Cedar, Western Hemlock or Douglas Fir. King County Parks will seek to plant trees that are appropriate for the chosen location(s). Park staff and volunteers will monitor tree health and water the trees regularly during the first few years after planting to ensure tree survival.

9. *How will removal affect the noise buffer provided by the wooded area?*

King County Parks does not believe the removal of the 12 cottonwood trees will change current conditions provided by the existing wooded buffer.

10. *What are the regulations around noise from the park?*

According to the City of Kirkland's noise ordinance (see municipal code, section 11.84A.070), the ordinance "shall not apply to regularly scheduled events at parks, such as public address systems for baseball games or park concerts".

11. *How can I receive updates about this project and other happenings at the park?*

King County Parks will notify park visitors, neighbors, and other community members as more project information becomes available through a variety of channels. To sign up for the Big Finn Hill Park e-newsletter (low traffic), visit: <http://www.kingcounty.gov/parks/bigfinnhill>.



Location Map: Cottonwood Trees Identified for Removal