Biodiversity is vital for Washington's public health, culture, and economy

Native species and ecosystems contribute billions of dollars each year to fisheries, timber harvest, outdoor recreation, and other sectors of Washington's economy. People rely on healthy ecosystems for clean water, clean air, natural flood control, carbon sequestration, reduced noise pollution, decreased heat island effect in urban areas, cultural practices, recreation, and health benefits. Unfortunately, fish, wildlife, and habitats are increasingly at risk in Washington. Population growth and climate change have been the driving factors for landscape changes affecting biodiversity in Washington.

This funding request will increase WDFW's capacity to help recover at-risk species and their habitats. By preventing more species from needing protection under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), we can prevent regulatory burdens on local communities and have greater success at recovering biodiversity in Washington.

Priority investments needed to restore Washington's biodiversity

1. **Develop and implement recovery plans**
   - Increase on-the-ground actions such as population augmentations or reintroductions, address known threats such as invasive species or disease, and improve habitat conditions.
   - Reduce delays or backlogs in the development and implementation of recovery plans for state and federally listed species and increase the pace and clarity of priority habitat and species guidance documents.

2. **Stop or slow declines in species and habitat loss**
   - Take actions to keep at-risk species from becoming state or federally listed.
   - Enhance the level of support for local, state, and federal decision makers and landowners through more effective and complete species and habitat information, guidance, and technical assistance.
   - Improve compliance with existing laws and rules and increase landowner participation in biodiversity.

3. **Improve our knowledge of species and habitat status, trends, and needs**
   - Increase science, planning, and action implementation capacity to fill critical knowledge gaps that will enable enhanced clarity of species population status and trends and habitat conditions. This will inform conservation strategies and improve effectiveness of management and recovery actions.

4. **Support partnerships, public engagement, and conservation education**
   - Support critical partner's biodiversity work by providing technical assistance, conservation guidance and data, and pass-through funding to support partner work.
   - Grow community awareness, engagement, and participation by helping Washingtonians contribute to conservation in their spaces and local communities.
   - Support future conservation leaders and stewards by providing informal and formal educational opportunities for K-12 students, families, and learners of all ages.

Washington Department of FISH & WILDLIFE

Restoring Washington's Biodiversity

We need bold action and adequate funding to avoid collapse of fish, wildlife, and ecosystems in Washington.

The time to act is now.

Worldwide, a species is going extinct every

10 minutes.

Washington is home to

268

Species of Greatest Conservation Need.

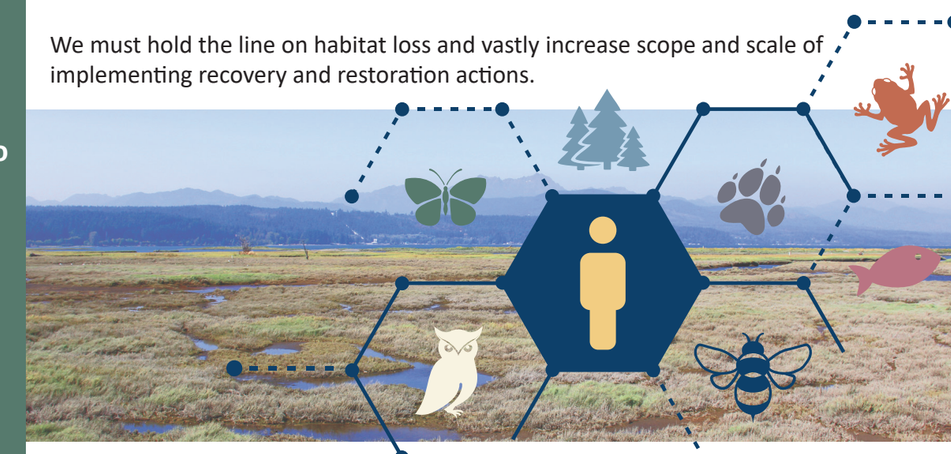
We need to protect every single one of them.

Contact:
Tom McBride
Legislative Director
(360) 480-1472
tom.mcbride@dfw.wa.gov

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is falling further behind in being able to achieve conservation goals and fulfill our mandate to "preserve, protect, and perpetuate" fish and wildlife.

The state's biodiversity restoration work is chronically underfunded, leaving the Department and policy makers with science gaps, incomplete knowledge of fish, wildlife, and habitat conditions, and the inability to comprehensively implement actions that recover species or prevent their declines.

We must hold the line on habitat loss and vastly increase scope and scale of implementing recovery and restoration actions.



Goals: Vastly expand and improve the effectiveness of habitat protection and restoration efforts, implement species recovery actions, and increase our knowledge about Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) populations to:

1. Increase the scope and scale of biodiversity recovery in Washington.
2. Prevent the need for future listings under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA).
3. Provide scientific feedback to influence habitat protection and restoration and recovery efforts.

Request: WDFW is requesting $47.6M to fund implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plan and other efforts to achieve 10% net gain of most important habitat, develop and implement action plans for 80% of at-risk species, and increase public participation in conservation by 25%.

Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) by Ecoregion

Ecoregions provide a useful framework for cooperating with federal agencies, neighboring states, and Canadian provinces on conservation planning and implementation. Focusing conservation effort in the higher priority conservation areas within each ecoregion will have the most benefit for the greatest number of wildlife species and habitats of concern.

The following provides an overview of each ecoregion and examples of SGCN that need immediate support. Please note: Some species may live in more than one ecoregion.

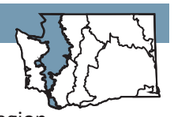
Northwest Coast

Washington's westernmost and wettest ecoregion extends from ocean depths to the Olympic Mountains' glaciated peaks. To the north, Cape Flattery is the lower 48 states' most northwestern point. To the south, the mouth of the Columbia River marks the ecoregion's southern border in WA.

Example species to support:

- Olympic mudminnow
- Pinto abalone
- Snowy plover

Puget Trough

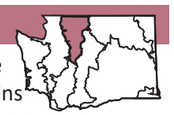


Flanked by forested foothills and freshened by many rivers, the Puget Sound ecoregion is home to more than 75% of the state's human population. This ecoregion runs the length of Washington, rising to about 1,000 feet elevation between the Cascade Mountains on the east and the Olympic Mountains and Willapa Hills on the west.

Example species to support:

- Island marble butterfly
- Olympia oyster
- Streaked horned lark

North Cascades



Rare alpine daisies and thousand-year-old cedars are found in the North Cascades ecoregion, which contains some of the largest expanses of wilderness in the lower 48 states. This ecoregion includes the Cascade Mountains north of Snoqualmie Pass and west of the Cascade crest northward into British Columbia.

Example species to support:

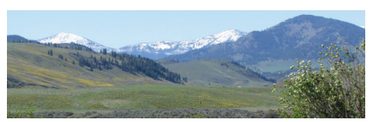
- Westslope cutthroat trout
- White-tailed ptarmigan
- Wolverine

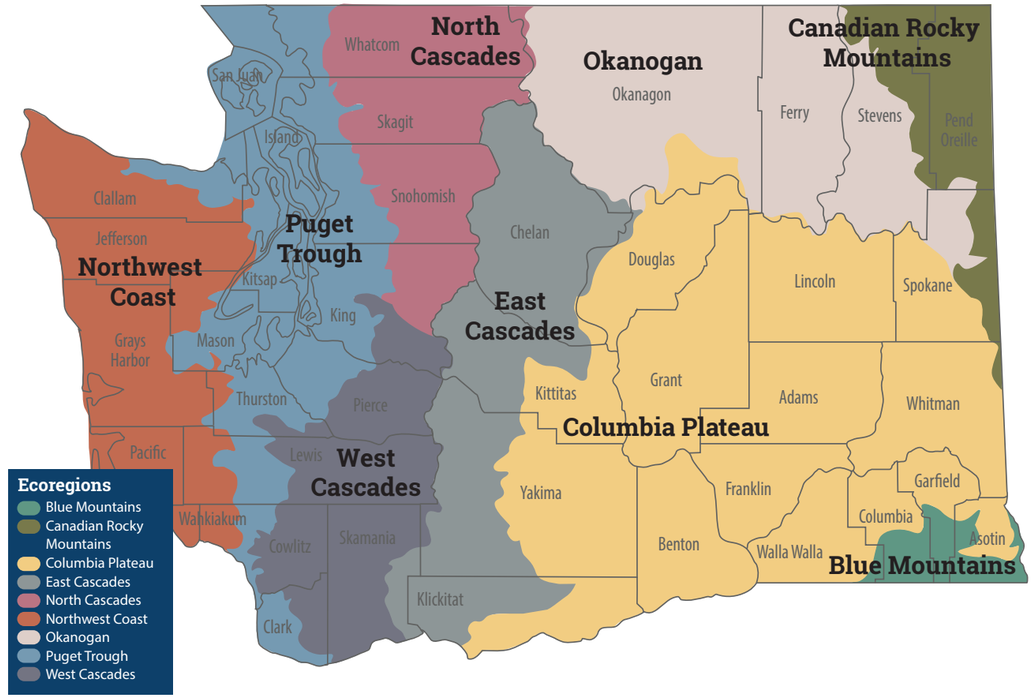
West Cascades

Rumbling volcanoes, ancient forests, and a wealth of amphibian diversity are found in the West Cascades ecoregion which encompasses the westside midsection of the great Cascades cordillera. In Washington, the West Cascades run southward from Snoqualmie Pass to the Columbia Gorge, the only lowland divide in the range.

Example species to support:

- Fisher
- Pacific lamprey
- Western pond turtle



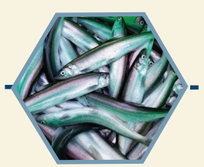


We need to fill science and data gaps to guide species protection and recovery actions

This funding request will increase science and planning capacity to fill critical knowledge gaps of species and habitats. Answering priority questions will help us understand threats, which will in turn inform recovery goals and management efforts.

Ring-necked snake

Burrowing owl



Columbia river smelt

Monarch butterfly

Jackrabbit

Amphibians & Reptiles 13 species	Birds 14 species	Fish/Shellfish 20 species	Invertebrates 60 species	Mammals 23 species

WDFW currently has little or no data on 130 Species of Greatest Conservation Need

In addition to conventional methods, WDFW will use innovative new technologies to monitor wildlife populations and gather data, including remote cameras with scent dispensers, thermal cameras, automated radio telemetry, sonar surveys, and environmental DNA technology.

Individuals who need to receive this information in an alternative format, language, or who need reasonable accommodations to participate in WDFW-sponsored public meetings and activities may contact the Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator at 360-902-2575, TTY (711), or email (Title6@dfw.wa.gov).

East Cascades

On the dry side of the Cascades lies one of Washington's most diverse ecoregions, with open stands of ponderosa pine and Garry oak that abut the edge of the shrubsteppe. Crossing the Columbia River, this mountainous ecoregion continues south through the length of Oregon.

Example species to support:

- Cascade red fox
- Hoary bat
- Western ridged mussel

Okanogan

In north-central Washington, the Okanogan ecoregion is a broad highland area separating the North Cascades and the Northern Rockies. Scenic river valleys, like the Methow, the Okanogan, and the Colville, run north to south.

Example species to support:

- Lynx
- Redband rainbow trout
- Sharp-tailed grouse

Canadian Rocky Mountains

The western edge of the Rocky Mountains forms this ecoregion in Washington's northeastern corner. Made up primarily of the Selkirk Mountains, the ecoregion is bounded by the Okanogan ecoregion on the west and touches to the Columbian Plateau ecoregion on its southwestern edge. As some of Washington's wildest country, this ecoregion is sparsely populated.

Example species to support:

- Mountain whitefish
- Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee

Columbia Plateau

Two major rivers, the Columbia and the Snake, dominate the dramatic dry landscape of Washington's largest ecoregion, which is also home to an inland sea of sagebrush and the state's fertile agricultural heartland.

Example species to support:

- Monarch butterfly
- Northern leopard frog
- White sturgeon
- Sagebrush sparrow
- Jackrabbits

Blue Mountains

As the smallest ecoregion in Washington, the rugged Blue Mountains in the state's extreme southeastern corner have a rolling high plateau dotted with ponderosa pine forests, vestiges of Palouse prairie, and steeply cut rimrock canyons.

Example species to support:

- Bull trout
- Rocky mountain tailed frog

10/11/2022