



# AGENCY OWNED/MANAGED LANDS BIG PICTURE OVERVIEW

WASHINGTON FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION - HABITAT COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2024

## **Cynthia Wilkerson, Lands Division Manager, Wildlife Program**

- Darric Lowery, Assistant Lands Division Manager
- Joel Sisolak, Planning and Recreation Section Manager
- Tim Walls, Stewardship Section Manager
- Julie Watson, Action Real Estate Section Manager
- Katie Laushman, Manager, North Olympic and South Puget Sound Wildlife Areas
- Lindsey Desmul, Lands Restoration Project Coordinator, R4
- Melinda Grey, Manager, Wenas Wildlife Area
- Brandon Troyer, Assistant Regional Wildlife Manager, R2 North



# AGENDA

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- Lands Division Overview
  - Purpose
  - Who
  - What
  - How
  - What's Coming
- HQ Sections
- Regional Spotlights
- Discussion

# LANDS DIVISION OVERVIEW



# What's our purpose?

## Protecting Land and Water for Wildlife and People

*Our vision is a Washington where fish and wildlife thrive in healthy habitats, and where people experience and enjoy our state's natural gifts for generations to come.*

### **By Actively Managing Lands, WFDW:**

- Preserves natural and cultural heritage
- Provides access for fishing, hunting, and other wildlife related recreation
- Fosters experiences, exploration, and a stewardship ethic



# WDFW Foundational Map

**2021-23 Biennium Expenses**  
Operating, Capital and Intangibles

*To preserve, protect and perpetuate fish, wildlife and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.*

Preserve, Protect and Perpetuate Fish, Wildlife and Ecosystems \$258.6M - 34.9%			
WIC	Preserve & Restore Aquatic Habitat & Species \$102.7M - 16.3%	Acquire and Manage Lands \$102.1M - 13.8%	Preserve & Restore Terrestrial Habitat & Species \$53.8M - 4.5%
Manage Ecosystems	A.1 (3.1)- Protect fish and their habitat from the effects of construction projects \$12.4M	L1 (4.1)- Maintain and enhance habitat for hunting, fishing and conservation on WDFW owned & managed lands \$53.6M	T.1 (5.2)- Consult with businesses, landowners and governments regarding terrestrial species and land impacts and liabilities \$3.8M
	A.2 (3.2)- Consult with businesses, landowners and governments regarding aquatic species impacts and liabilities \$16.2M	L2 (4.2)- Acquire new lands and sell lands that no longer support serving our mission \$25.6M	T.2 (5.3)- Partner with private landowners to implement conservation strategies \$3.2M
	A.3 (3.3)- Reduce risk & decrease devastation of oil spills \$3.4M	L3 (4.3)- Build & maintain safe, sanitary and ecologically friendly water access sites \$11.6M	T.3 (5.4)- Study and plan for climate impacts on lands and resulting effects on species \$2.1M
	A.4 (3.4)- Ensure that there remains enough water in waterways to allow for healthy fish lifecycles \$3.4M	L4 (4.4)- Ensure public safety on our lands \$11.3M	T.4 (5.5)- Wildlife permitting and enforcement of regulations \$4.6M
	A.5 (3.5)- Ensure fish survivability by removing stream barriers and appropriately addressing water diversions \$11.3M		T.5 (5.6)- Recover and sustain diverse wildlife populations \$5.7M
	A.6 (3.6)- Acquire funding for and complete habitat restoration projects \$39.0M		T.6 (5.7)- Respond to and mitigate wolf conflicts \$5.4M
	A.7 (3.7)- Recover and sustain diverse aquatic populations \$12.5M		T.7 (5.8)- Acquire funding for and complete habitat restoration projects \$10.9M
	A.8 (3.8)- Monitor and control aquatic invasive species \$14.1M		
	A.9 (3.9)- Study and plan for climate impacts on waterways and resulting effects on aquatic lifecycles \$1.1M		
	A.10 (3.10)- Enforce protection of aquatic habitats \$7.4M		
Recreational and Commercial Fishing Opportunities \$336.7 - 45.6%			
WIC	Manage Fishing Opportunities \$166.2M - 22.4%	Produce Hatchery Fish \$170.5M - 23.0%	Manage Hunting Opportunities \$43.7M - 6.2%
Manage Commercial and Recreational Opportunities within Ecosystems	F.1 (1.1)- Enforce recreational fishing opportunities and regulations \$16.6M	P.1 (2.1)- Produce trout and warm water game fish \$40.9M	H.1 (6.1)- Enforce hunting opportunities and regulations \$13.1M
	F.2 (1.2)- Enforce commercial fishing opportunities and regulations \$9.5M	P.2 (2.2)- Produce salmon and steelhead \$116.0M	H.2 (6.2)- Provide hunter education opportunities \$3.2M
	F.3 (1.3)- Develop, negotiate, and implement fishery co-management plans \$37.4M	P.3 (2.3)- Build and maintain hatcheries \$13.6M	H.3 (6.3)- Set sustainable hunting seasons \$2.5M
	F.4 (1.4)- Monitor and manage fin fish populations \$81.8M		H.4 (6.4)- Survey game populations & population trends \$2.2M
	F.5 (1.5)- Monitor and manage shellfish populations \$9.0M		H.5 (6.5)- Study game species populations and their health \$6.7M
	F.6 (1.6)- Sell recreational fishing licenses \$9.8M		H.6 (6.6)- Respond to game species wildlife conflicts and dangerous wildlife (non-wolf) \$9.7M
	F.7 (1.7)- Market fishing opportunities \$2.1M		H.7 (6.7)- Secure hunting access on private lands \$2.0M
			H.8 (6.8)- Sell hunting licenses \$2.7M
			H.9 (6.9)- Market hunting opportunities \$3.7M
Business Management & Obligations \$97.4M - 13.2%			
WIC	K.1- Provide agency leadership and strategy \$13.5M	K.2- Communicate agency matters with the public and legislature \$5.8M	K.3- Manage finances and contracts \$12.5M
Business Management & Obligations \$97.4M - 13.2%	K.5- Manage information technology \$21.2M	K.6- Build and maintain office facilities \$10.0M	K.7- Maintain agency records \$3.7M
	K.9- WDFW legal counsel \$5.3M		
			K.4- Manage human resources \$12.0M
			K.8- Respond to public safety incidents (police) \$13.4M

Acquire and Manage Lands \$102.1M - 13.8%
L1 (4.1)- Maintain and enhance habitat for hunting, fishing and conservation on WDFW owned & managed lands. \$53.6M
L2 (4.2)- Acquire new lands and sell lands that no longer support serving our mission \$25.6M
L3 (4.3)- Build & maintain safe, sanitary and ecologically friendly water access sites \$11.6M
L4 (4.4)- Ensure public safety on our lands \$11.3M

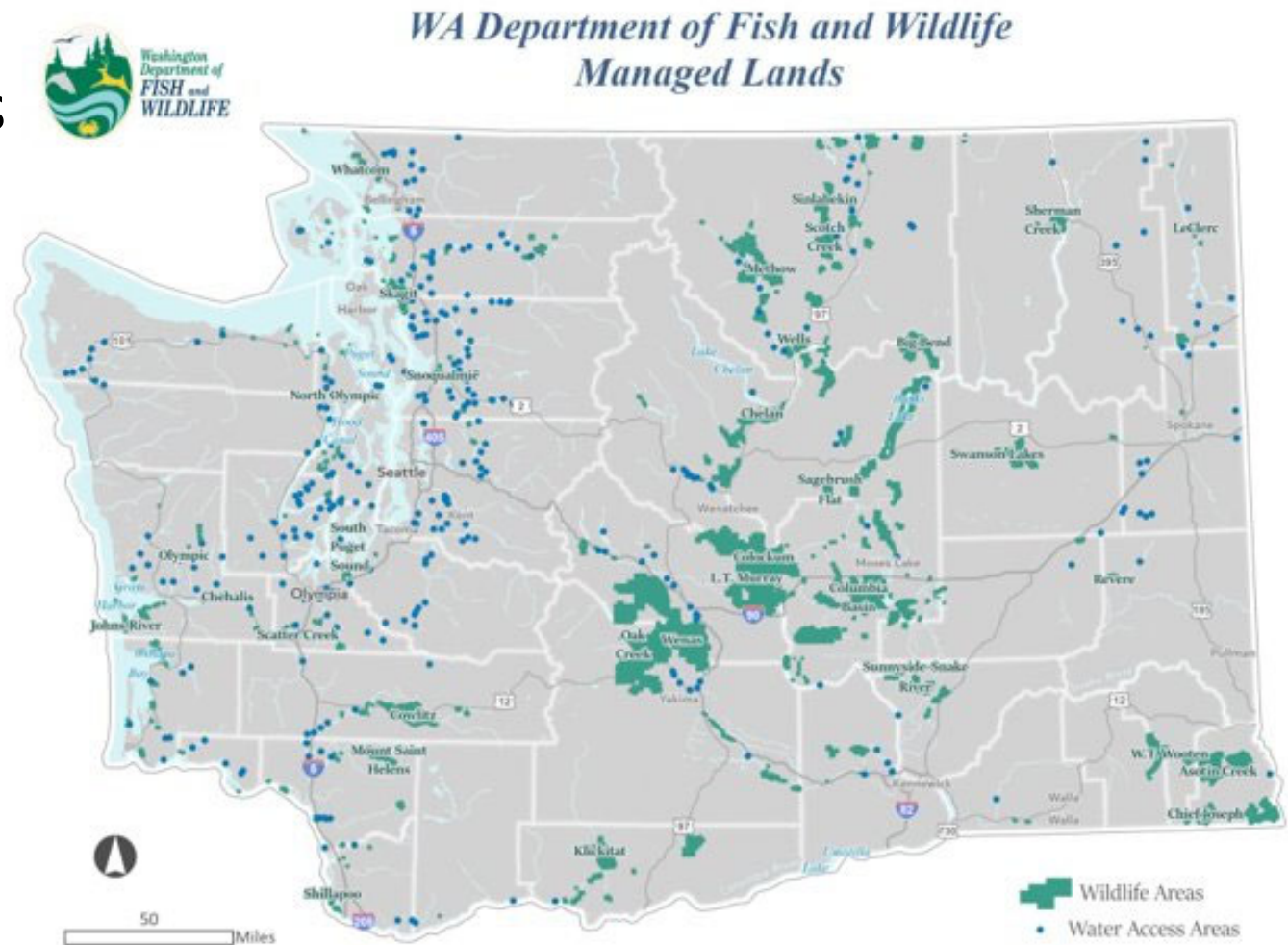


# WA Department Managed Lands

- Over 1 million acres
  - 33 wildlife areas
  - 214 units

450 boat launches

- 220 lakes
- 44 rivers
- Puget Sound



# 25-Year Strategic Plan



25-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN  
(2020-2045)

A Path to an Improved Era  
for Fish, Wildlife and People



- **Strategy 1**: Proactively address conservation challenges
- **Strategy 2**: Engage communities through recreation and stewardship
- **Strategy 3**: Deliver science that informs Washington's most pressing fish and wildlife questions
- **Strategy 4**: Model operational and environmental excellence

## WDFW's Conservation Principles Policy 5004

- a. We practice conservation by managing, protecting, and restoring ecosystems for the long-term benefit of people, and for fish, wildlife, and their habitat.
- b. We work across disciplines to solve problems because of their connections among organisms, species, and habitats.
- c. We integrate ecological, social, economic, and institutional perspectives into our decision making .
- d. We embrace new knowledge and apply best science to address changing conditions through adaptive management.
- e. We collaborate with our co-managers and conservation and community partners, to help us achieve our shared goals.



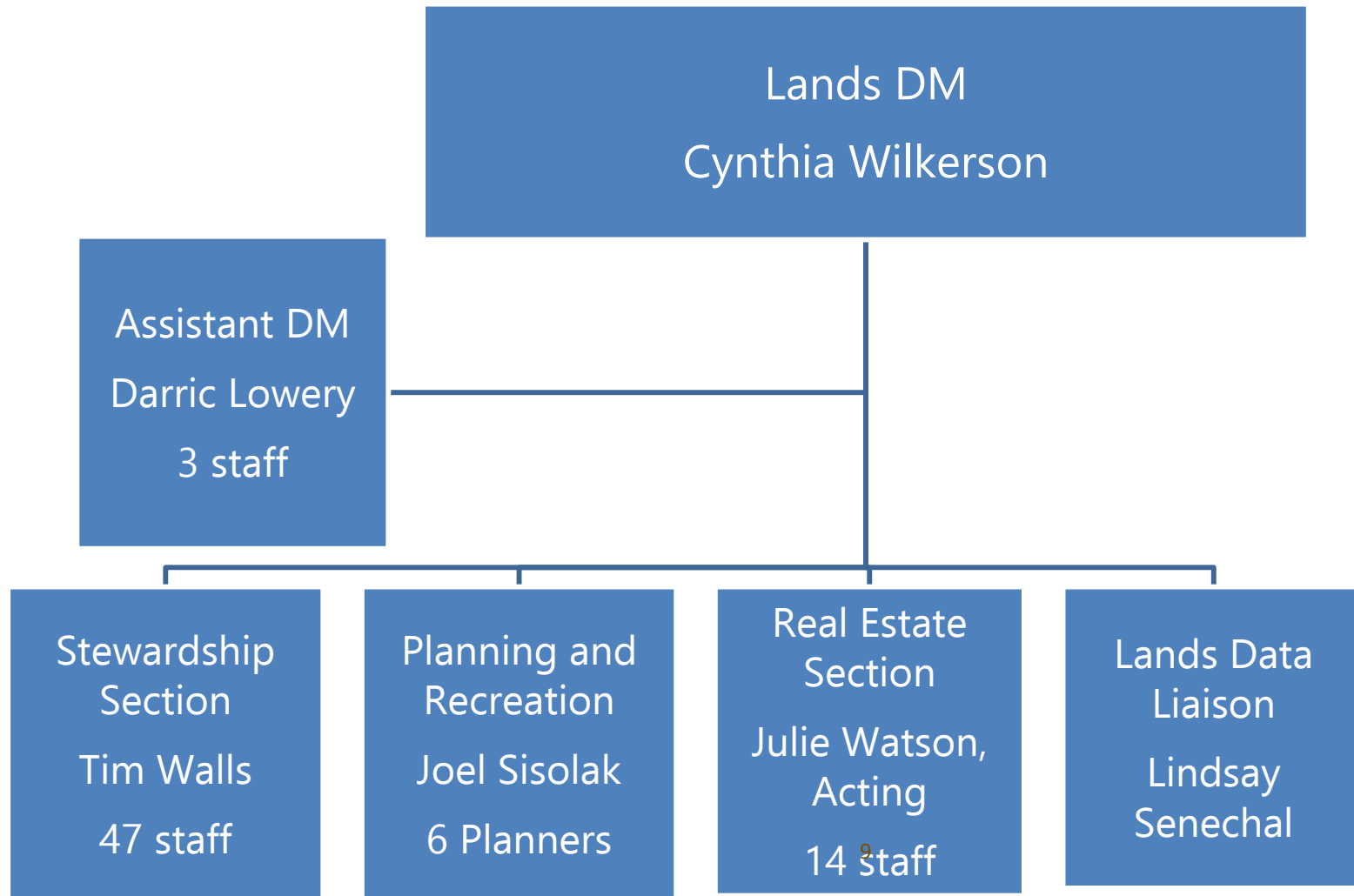
# Who Are We?

## Proud Public Lands Stewards





# Lands Division - HQ



Headquarters Staffing	71 FTEs
Regional Staff	129 staff



# Lands Division - Regions

Region	RPM	ARPM/LOS
1	Kevin Robinette	Special!
2	Justin Haug	Rich Finger + Brandon Troyer
3	Ross Huffman	Hannah Bates
4	Loren Brokaw	Rob Wingard
5	Sandra Jonker	Daren Hauswald
6	Brian Calkins	Matt Blankenship



- 24 Wildlife Area Managers
- 9 Water Access Area Managers
- 129 Regional Staff positions



# What do we DO?



## Highlights



# Lands Showcase

## Primary messaging approach for all audiences

- 4 brand pillars

Messaging:

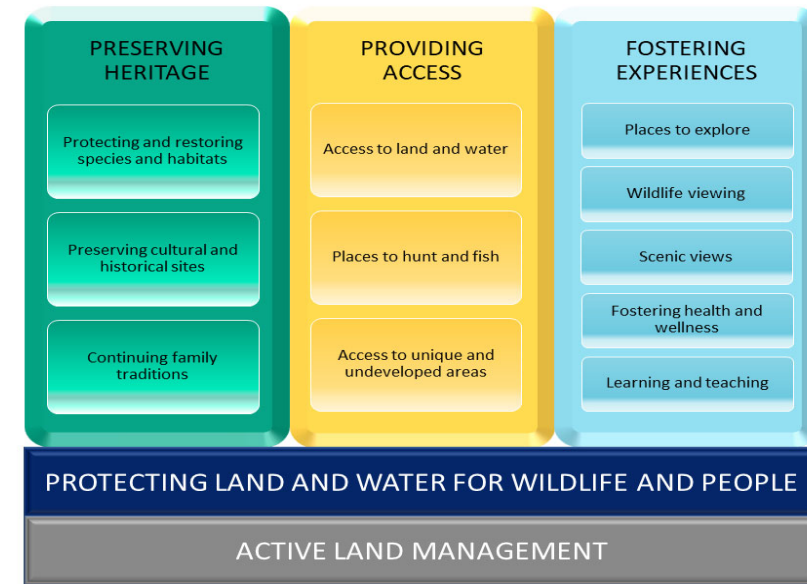
be specific

focus on benefits

Be welcoming and inclusive

Include visual direction (photos and charts)

**A messaging note:** Bringing the brand pillars and platform to life is the job of everyone at WDFW, not just the communications staff— from the executive level to field representatives. Each plays an important part in ensuring that WDFW has a consistent message about its mission, the benefits residents enjoy because of this mission, and the importance of ensuring that WDFW can continue to do the essential work of protecting habitats for wildlife and people for generations to come.



## PRIMARY MESSAGES FOR ALL AUDIENCES

Core Brand Pillar: Protection	Brand Pillar 2: Providing Access	Brand Pillar 3: Fostering Experiences	Brand Pillar 4: Preserving Heritage
WDFW Lands Division does more than management. We nurture our wildlife and habitats for present and future generations.	Our work ensures that healthy habitats can be enjoyed, and that those in trouble can be restored—bringing us all closer to nature.	WDFW Lands Division is dedicated to keeping Washington a place where fish and wildlife thrive—and where memories are made every day.	WDFW Lands Division is committed to safeguarding the unique heritage of our state’s fish, wildlife, and people.
<p><b>Describing restoration and protection activities:</b></p> <p>Messaging formula: [Habitat description] + [problem]. [What WDFW is doing] + [benefit].</p> <p><i>Baby salmon live here, but they’re struggling to survive because the bank is damaged. We’re restoring this area so that in 6 months, you and your family can start making fishing memories again.</i></p>			

[Lands Showcase \(sharepoint.com\)](https://sharepoint.com)



**Pleasant Harbor Access Area**

### Providing Access in Washington

Providing recreational water access is very important to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Each blue dot represents a water access area the department manages for this purpose. Grants and other state funding allow the department to invest in the acquisition and development of properties that increase water access to the public. These areas are managed specifically to support fishing and boating activities.

**Methow Wildlife Area**

### Conserving for Public Value

Other species contribute to the department's conservation goals. For example, reintroducing beavers to degraded watersheds support wetland restoration and rehabilitation. The dam building and foraging habits of reintroduced beavers alters the landscape, and stimulates diverse vegetative growth. In winter, deer and elk frequent beaver ponds to forage on plants that grow where beavers have been active.

**Heller Bar Access Area**

Improving access and fostering experiences

**WDFW Forest Management**

### Klickitat Wildlife Area

The Klickitat Wildlife Area spans approximately 27,300 acres across units throughout Klickitat County on the west slope of the Cascade Mountains. It provides important habitat for western gray squirrels, Vancouver's swift, and western pond turtles, as well as wintering range for white-tailed deer and elk.

Forests on the wildlife area suffer from a high risk of severe wildfire and insect damage. Conifer trees are shedding out oak woodlands, which are vital for western gray squirrels.

**Snake-Spoke River Wildlife Area**

Wildlife Area Manager Pat Kaehler talks about the wildlife area vision.

### Quick facts

- The wildlife area covers 23 square miles — more land than the city of Yakima!
- Before the dams and irrigation canals, the area was almost entirely shrubsteppe grassland.
- Though Snake River is in the name, none of the units are on the Snake River.

### What's special about this wildlife area?

Wetlands, grasslands, shrubsteppe, cultivated cropland, and riparian corridors support a diversity of wildlife. Deer, elk, waterfowl, upland game birds, and small mammals, as well as reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates roam the land and water. We have rattlesnakes and monarch butterflies too!

*The wildlife area wetlands are a critical stop for migratory birds on the Pacific Flyway*

**L.T. Murray Wildlife Area**

### Enjoying the L.T. Murray

The Back Country Horsemen of Washington gain access to the L.T. Murray unit for their large group by applying for a WDFW lands commercial permit and paying a fee. Fee amounts will vary depending on the planned activities and other factors, such as duration of use, group size, and habitat type, to name a few. Organizers should coordinate with the regional wildlife area manager or speak with a regional lands agent for more information on fees and other requirements. [Click here](#) for more information on acquiring a commercial permit for use of WDFW lands for your group.

# Story Maps



# Lands Showcase objectives



## **Raise Awareness**

Raise public and political awareness of WDFW wildlife areas and water access sites (including the work that occurs on them, their value and benefits to Washingtonians)



## **Increase Visibility**

Increase visibility of WDFW land locations and how to access them, which will lead to increased compatible uses of our wildlife areas and water access sites



## **Increase Value**

Increase public and political value for WDFW's wildlife areas and water access sites



## **Increase Support**

Increase support for funding of WDFW's Operations and Maintenance needs on wildlife areas and water access sites



## Increase in Lands Division Spending

Biennium  
16/17:  
\$30.9M

Biennium  
22/23: \$44M  
(up 43%)

FY16 \$21/acre  
FY23 \$38/acre



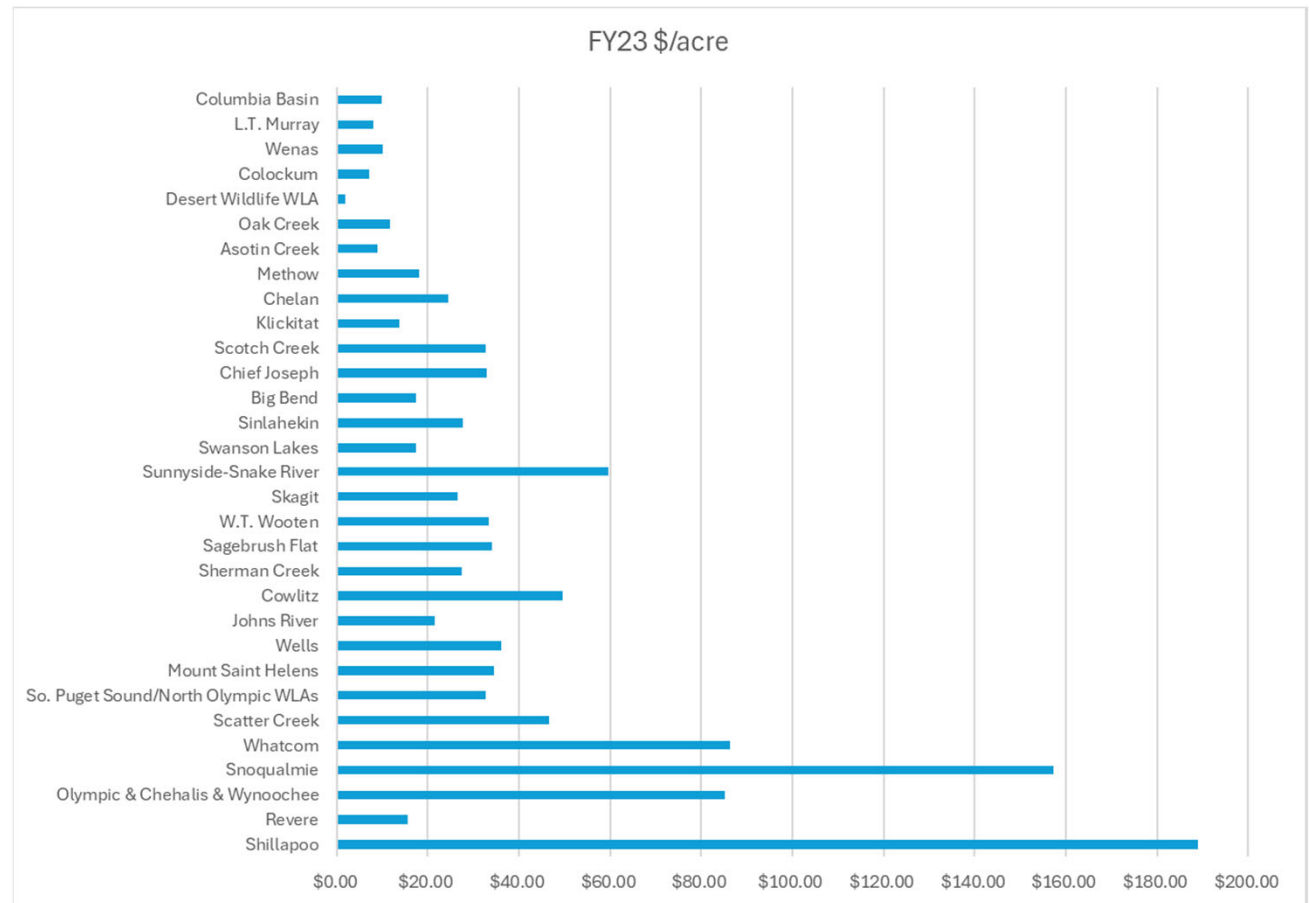


# Wildlife Areas per acre Spending FY23

Average Expenditure =  
\$38/acre

Adjusted Average  
Estimated Need =  
\$95/acre

WLA range from 0.9-5.8 FTE  
Average 4.3



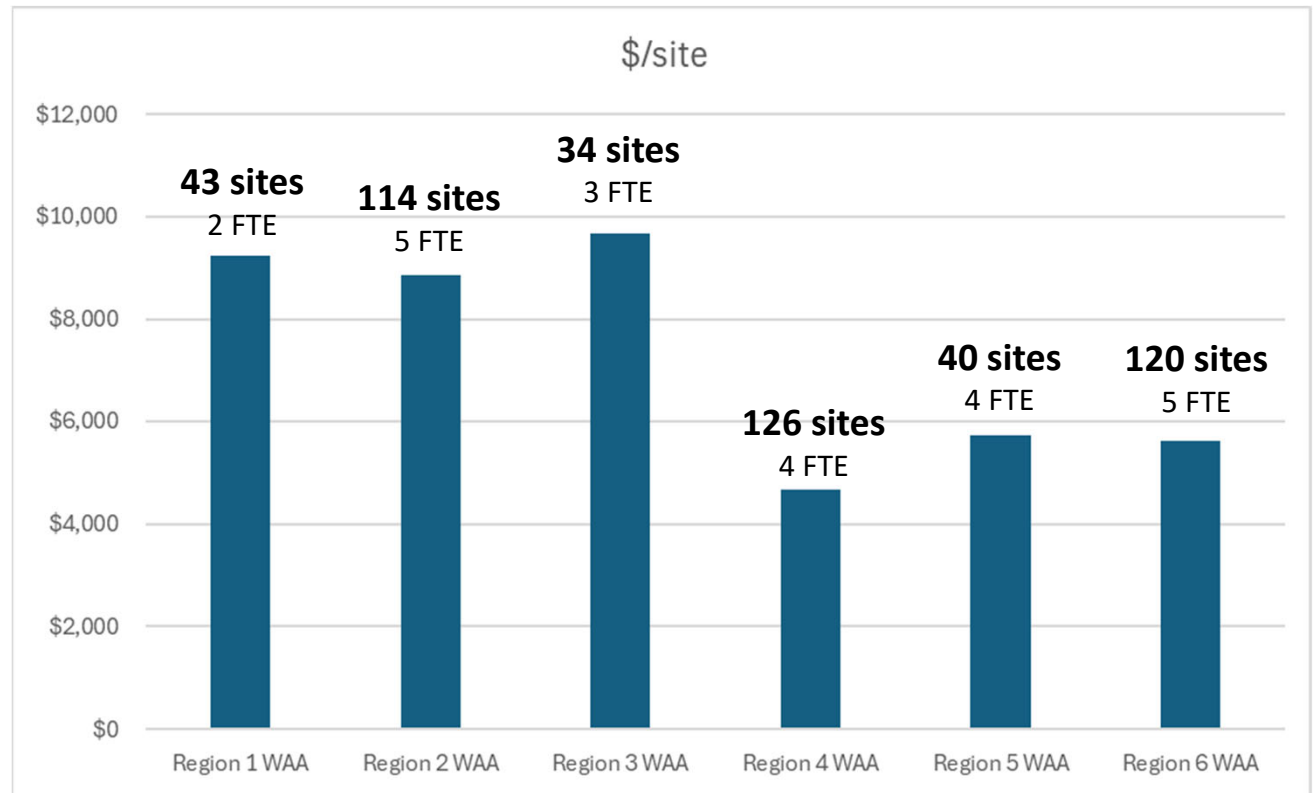
Size ranges 2,200 – 160,000 acres



# Water Access Area Spending FY23

Average = \$7,300

Average Estimated  
Need = \$14,000-17,000



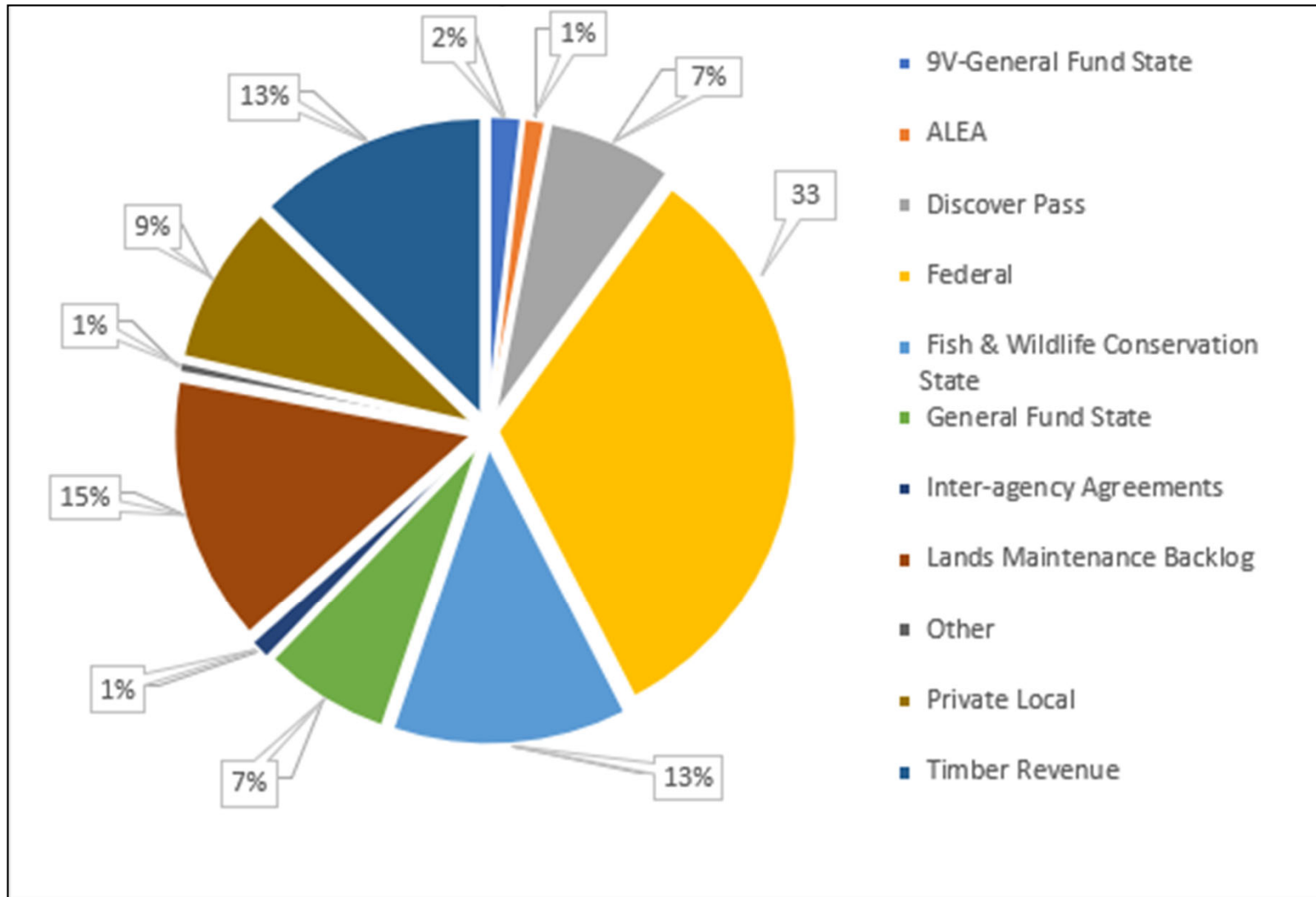


## Budget and Legislative Gains

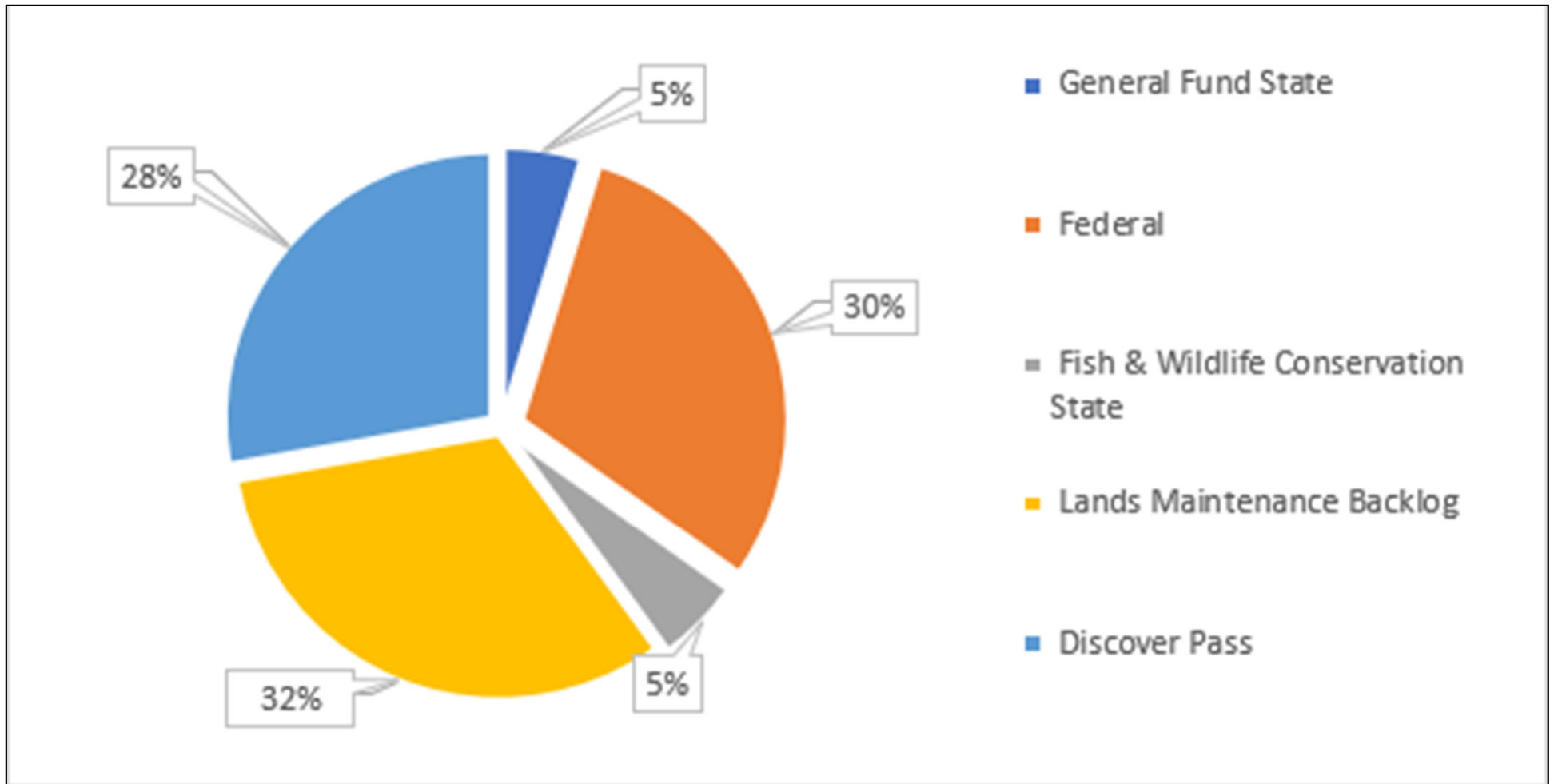
- 9V – Ongoing O&M for new lands
- PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes)
- Budget Reprioritization Criteria (BRC)
- \$5M/year Recreation Infrastructure Backlog



# Wildlife Areas Fund Sources FY23



# Water Access Areas Fund Sources FY23



# The Intensity of COVID

- Closing and Re-opening Lands
- Stay-at-Home Order
- Vaccine Mandate, Loss of Staff/Morale
- Increasing Public Use & Abuse
- Increasing Visibility of the Importance of Public Lands for Physical and Mental Health
- Increasing coordination with the Director's Office
- Increasing coordination with state agency partners
- \$5M a year in Recreation Infrastructure Backlog
- Increasing Tribal Concerns about Recreation Impacts
- Recreation Impacts on Tribal Treaty Rights and Lifeways Partnership (WA tribes, GOIA, DFW, DNR, Parks)



# Recreation Impacts on Tribal Treaty Rights and Lifeways

Executive Order 21-02

DFW: Policy 5007 – Consultation and Coordination with Tribal Governments, Cultural Resources moved to CAMP

WDFW Recreation Strategy Tribal Engagement (Oct 2020 – Sept 2021)

Centennial Accords – Tribal Request 2021-2022

Visitor Use Study Earth Economics

WDFW, Parks, DNR 2023-2025 Legislative Requests

America the Beautiful Challenge grant





Washington Department of  
**Fish and Wildlife**



Governor's Office of  
**INDIAN AFFAIRS**



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF

**NATURAL RESOURCES**

**HILARY S. FRANZ | COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS**

## Recreation Impacts on Tribal Treaty Rights and Lifeways

### *Vision:*

*Tribes and state agencies working together to co-develop recreation management tools and an adaptive management framework that effectively coordinates cooperative stewardship of natural and cultural resources and preserves protected tribal rights on state lands.*







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# Key Partnerships – Working Together



## Wildlife Program:

- Diversity Division – species and landscape restoration
- Game Division – habitat enhancement
- Science Division – GIS, Data Management
- Admin Division – wide-ranging support

## Habitat Program – habitat restoration

Fish Program – water access areas, hatcheries, fishing management, restoration

Enforcement – rules, on-site

CAMP – project delivery, cultural resources

Director's Office – legislation, budget, policy, CAPE (communication, public engagement, social science, climate change), Regional Directors

Externals – tribes, sister agencies, counties, RFEs, land trusts, recreation and conservation NGOs, and MANY MORE!!!



# Lands Division Strategic Initiatives

1. Right-size Budget to Portfolio
2. Establish an Asset Management Framework
3. Implement Recreation Strategy
4. Right-size Portfolio to Mission



# 2025-2027 Legislative Asks

## Maintenance Level

- 9V Operating Costs from Capital Projects
- County and Other Assessments
- Post-Wildfire Habitat Recovery
- Wildfire Suppression

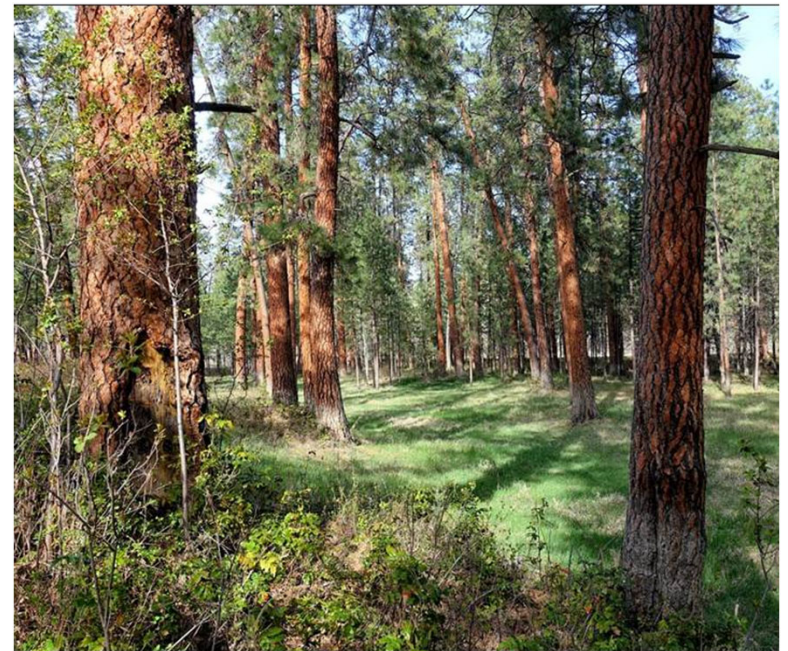


# 2025-2027 Legislative Asks

## Policy level: Lands Stewardship

\$10M (On-going \$13.2M)

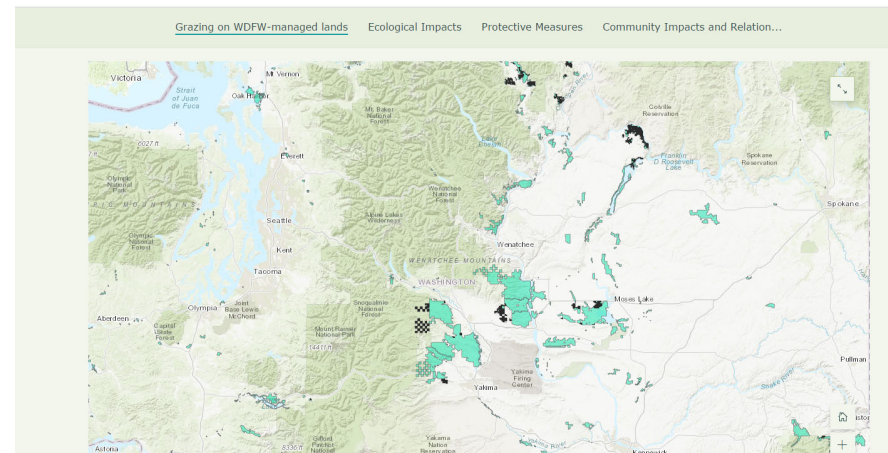
1. Urgent Stewardship needs  
(\$6M; On-going \$8.5M)
2. Estimate/ track true portfolio need  
(\$200k one-time)
3. Recreation Strategy Implementation  
(\$1.9M; On-going \$2.5M)
4. Ecological Assessment/ Manage  
Impacts to State Lands (\$1.9M)



# 2025-2027 Legislative Asks

Policy level: Forest Health - \$2M

- ❑ 23-25 approved \$4M per biennium, on-going, no agency indirect, <\$6M prior
- ❑ 25-27 package seeks to restore to \$6M per biennium, on-going
- ❑ The \$2M request focuses on Prescribed Burn crews to accomplish 2,000 acres of burning.





# Senior Staff Overviews



Photo: WDFW/Darric Lowery

# Assistant Lands Division Manager

## Role:

- General Lands leadership and assistance
- Lands budget, policy, and contract administration
- Regional operations coordination and support Regional Lands leads
- Jointly overseeing management on 33 WLAs and 450+ WAAs.
- Capital project coordination and engagement with CAMP
- Safety and health standard compliance in Lands
- Lands Wildfire management and post fire recovery coordination
- Cultural Resource coordination and prioritization for WP
- Grant funding application coordination







Photo: WDFW/Darric Lowery

# Land Operations Team

- **Role:**
  - Support Regional Wildlife Program Lands & Lands HQ staff
  - Administrative support for Lands Division
  - Lead infrastructure management and tracking
  - Stewards divisional process and procedures
  - Spearhead efforts to enhance operational efficiencies
- **Specialized staff**
  - Administrative Assistant 4 and Management Analyst 4





Photo: WDFW/Darric Lowery

# Land Operations Team

- **Special Tasks:**

- **Nicole Kates, Lands Admin support-** logistics, processes management, information gathering and reporting, record keeping, special projects, and general Lands support
- **Matt Gibbons, Infrastructure Coordinator-** active project oversight, inventory and conditions tracking, needs organizations and analysis
- **Darric Lowery, Assistant Division Manager** cross-region and division coordination, prioritization, operational efficiencies



# Regional Lands Structure

WDFW/Janet Anthony

- **Staffing:**

- Assistant Regional Wildlife program manager-  
“Regional Lands leads”
  - WLA Manager
  - WAA Manager



# Real Estate Services

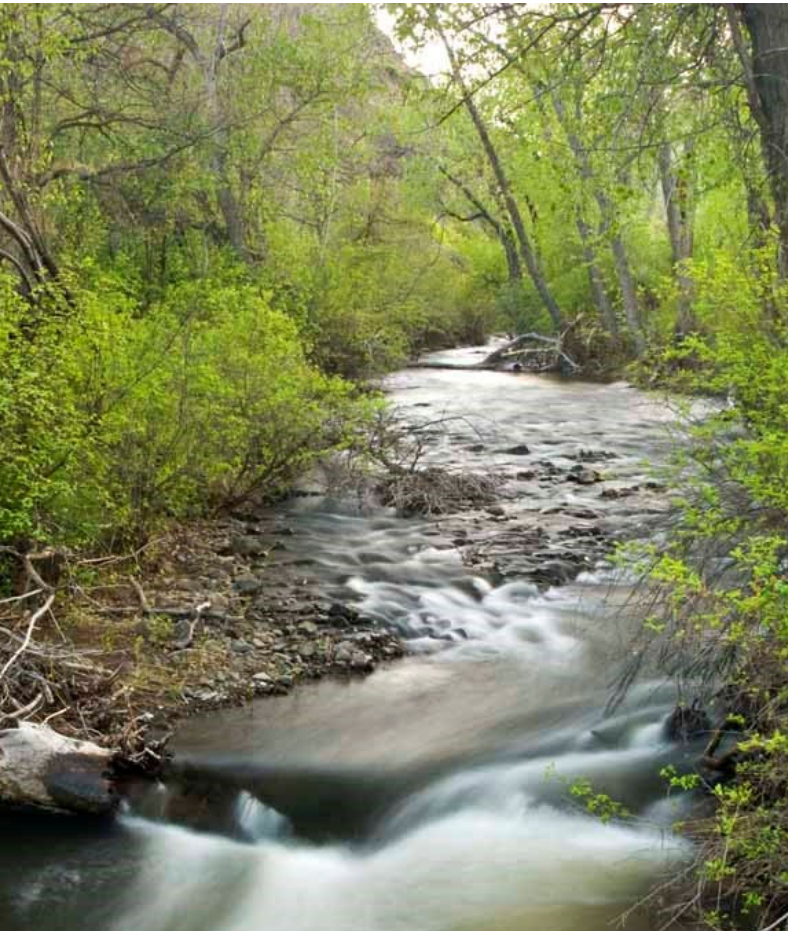
Julie Watson – Acting RES Manager  
Travis Weller – Grants Manager  
Lisa Coffman – Lands 20/20 and  
Acquisition Funding Coordinator  
Thom Woodruff – Acquisition Supervisor  
Dawn Anderson Acquisition Coordinator  
Jerrod Ploof – Property Management  
Supervisor  
Elise LeBarron – Property Management  
Coordinator  
Vacant – Water Rights Specialist

## Lands Agents:

April Stallinga – Region 1  
Francis Huynh – Region 2  
    -Vacant Assistant LA R2  
Randy Carbary – Region 3  
Belinda Rotten – Region 4  
Steve McCormick – Region 5  
Chad Buck - Region 6



# Real Estate Services



PILT reform in 2019

Nearly 24K acres acquired - fee title and CE  
52 acres acquired

60 transactions

Nearly \$60M in grant funding, over \$35M  
spent

Lands Acquisition Policy and Lands 20/20  
process updated

# Land Acquisitions

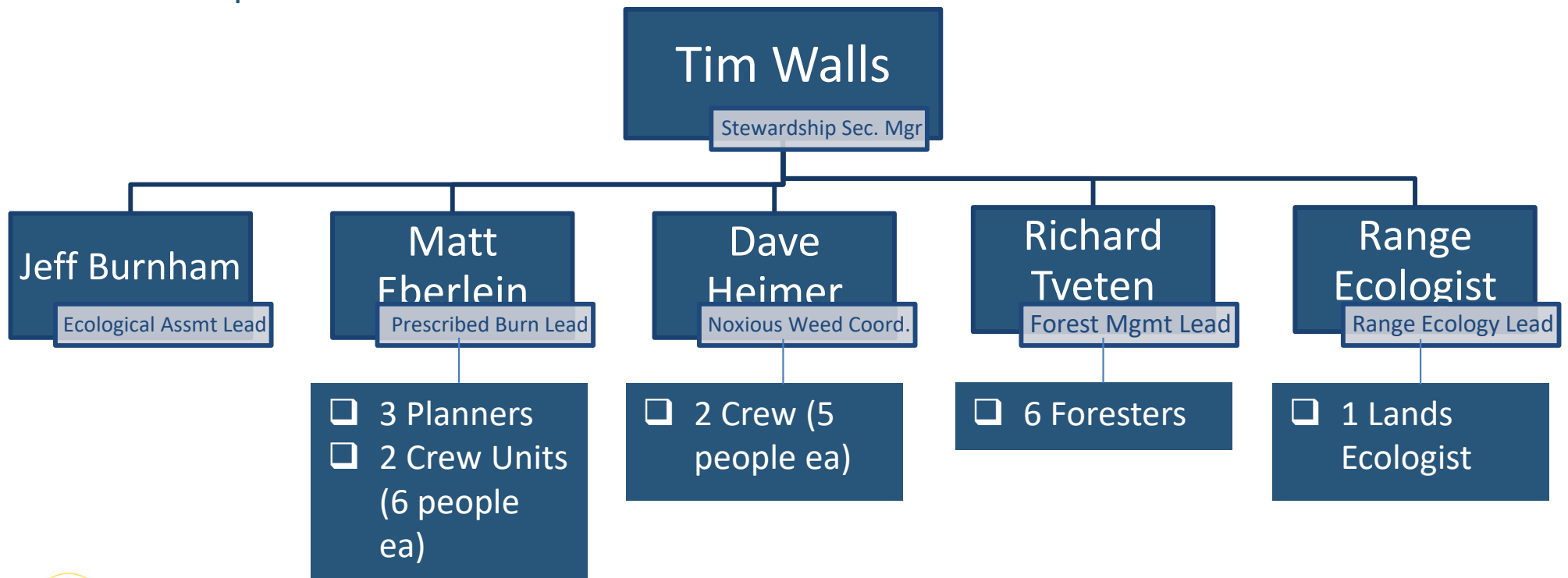
Central Ferry Canyon  
Chapman Lake  
Chester Butte  
Grayland  
McLoughlin Falls  
Nemah Tideland  
Theler Wetland  
Simcoe  
South Fork Manastash  
Violet Prairie  
Wenas Cleman  
Mountain



# Lands Stewardship Section

Stewardship Section's role is to fulfill three key areas of support to Regional land managers:

- Measuring and tracking ecological integrity of DFW-managed lands, including efficacy of practices to reach integrity targets.
- Technical assistance and larger-scale projects in focal landscape types
- Strategic, focused technical and crew support beyond what day-to-day operations can do.



# Lands Stewardship Section

## Ecological Integrity

- Long-term impact:  
Multiple tracks
- Short-term impact: Framework by July 2024, Support Tribal Recreation Impacts
- Long-term target: Evaluate all lands, integrate in planning, projects
- Upcoming challenges:  
Relevance and efficacy
- 25-27 Budget:  
Increase staff to 3; make it ongoing.



LT Murray Wildlife Area





# Lands Stewardship Section

## Noxious Weed Control

- Long-term impact:  
5,500 acres treated
- Short-term impact:  
2,772 acres surveyed, 233 acres treated
- Long-term target:  
Technical assistance, focused support, weeds controlled
- Upcoming challenges:  
Emergent weeds, climate change impacts
- 25-27 Budget:  
Increase funded level vs. grants, lifecycle old equipment



Setting up drone herbicide treatment in Skagit WLA



# Lands Stewardship Section

## Range Ecology

- Long-term impact:
  - 80 ag leases totaling 11,814 ac
  - 61 grazing permits totaling 134,000 ac
- Short-term impact:
  - 12 ag leases renewals totaling 1,767 ac
  - 12 gr. permit renewals totaling 8,380 ac
- Long-term target:
  - Evaluate all lands, integrate in planning, projects
- Upcoming challenges:
  - Tie leases, permits into plans' targets for ecological integrity
- 25-27 Budget:
  - Maintain existing budget



July 2018



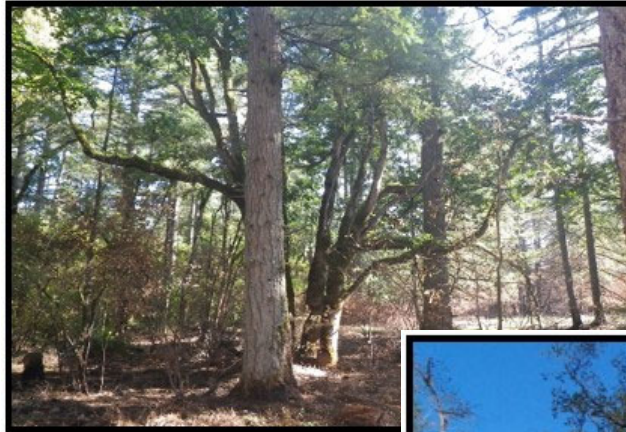
June 2023



# Lands Stewardship Section

## Forest Management

- Long-term impact:  
19,965 acres since 2014
- Short-term impact:  
2,289 acres
- Long-term target:  
100,000 acres by 2044
- Upcoming challenges:  
Market fluctuations  
Higher costs with higher difficulty
- 25-27 Budget:  
Forest Health (all),  
restore to \$6m ongoing



Pre-treatment Oak Release in Scatter Creek Wildlife Area

6 months post



Year 6



# Lands Stewardship Section

## Prescribed Burning

- ❑ Long-term impact:  
10,220 acres since 2005
- ❑ Short-term impact:  
525 acres
- ❑ Long-term target:  
100,000 acres by 2044
- ❑ Upcoming challenges:  
Climate, burn difficulty, labor shortage
- ❑ 25-27 Budget:  
Forest Health (all), restore to \$6m ongoing; also lifecycle equipment replacement (fire trucks)



Pre-treatment Sinlahekin Wildlife Area



Immediate post treatment



30 days post treatment



# Planning and Recreation Section

Joel Sisolak, Manager

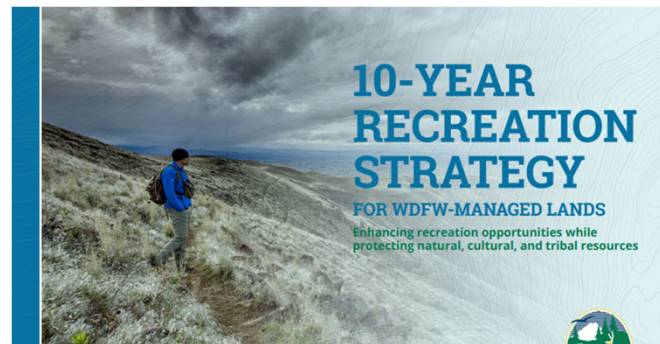
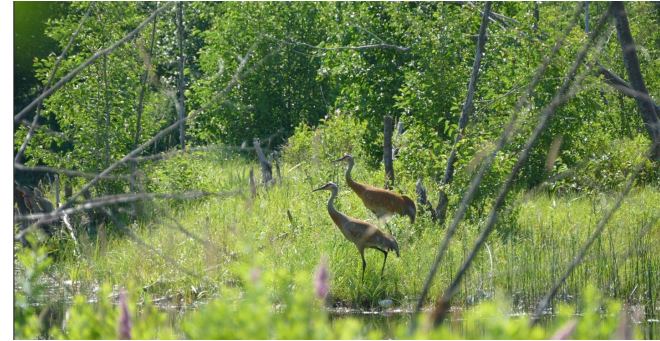
Heide Andersen

Shane Belson

Erin Browning

Holly English

Lauri Vigue



# Planning and Recreation – Current Projects

- Region 4 Water Access Area plan
- Section 6 plans: Central Ferry Canyon, Chester Butte
- Wildlife Area plans – Skagit, Methow, Cowlitz, Wenas, Olympia Willapa
- Rulemaking – Illegal routes, Area-specific rules
- Travel Management – Signs, Inventory and Assessment, Policy and Program Development, Green Dot, Quincy Lakes, Methow
- Ambassador Program
- Master Agreements with NGOs
- Visitation Study (continued)



# Area-specific Rulemaking

- Wildlife Program initiative
- Targeted approach to reflect specific issues in specific places
- Complements statewide rules and local signage
- 3 phase effort





# Regional Highlights



# McNeil Island Habitat Restoration

**Katie Laushman**  
Wildlife Area Manager  
South Puget Sound  
and North Olympic Wildlife Areas



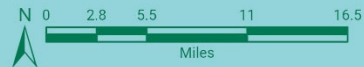
Washington Department of  
**FISH & WILDLIFE**



# South Puget Sound Wildlife Area



Department of Fish and Wildlife



This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.



# McNeil Island

- Historically used by the Nisqually, Steilacoom, and Puyallup Tribes
- Was established as a federal penitentiary in 1875
- Deeded to state management in the 1980s, which included a state prison until 2011.
- **DFW**: manages 70% (3,119 acres)
- **DOC** (Dept. of Corrections): manages 30% (1,326 acres)
- **DSHS** (Dept. of Social and Health Services): operates the Special Commitment Center on the island
- **DNR** (Dept. of Natural Resources): manages the tidelands
- Closed to the public





# Interagency Collaboration



# Milewa Estuary Restoration: Completed in 2022



# Upcoming Restoration: Floyd's Cove Restoration



## Challenges:

- Transport of infrastructure to the island
- Meeting the needs of all agencies' usages and goals

## Successes:

- Continued interagency coordination and compromise
- Habitat engineer flexibility and creativity



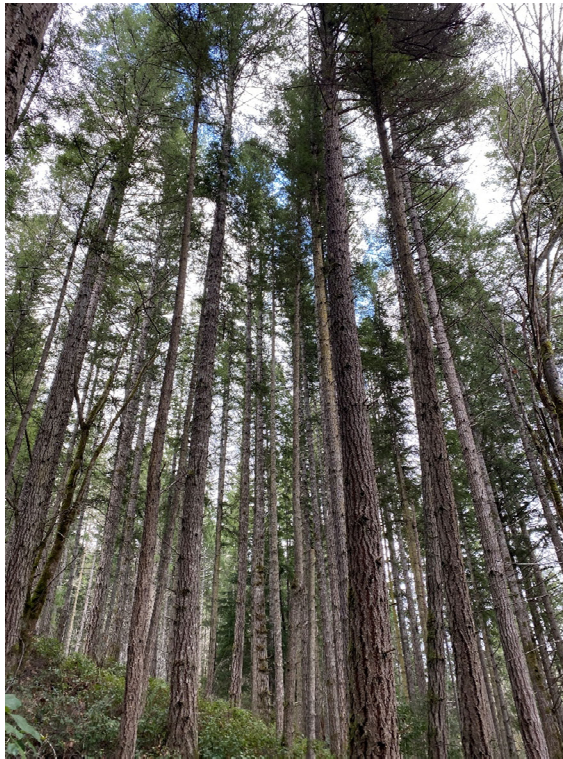
# Upcoming Restoration: Forest Health Improvement

## Challenges:

- Transport of infrastructure to/ timber from the island
- Gaining federal approval

## Successes:

- Continued interagency coordination
- Shared goals on the island





Thank you!



# Spencer Island Restoration – R4

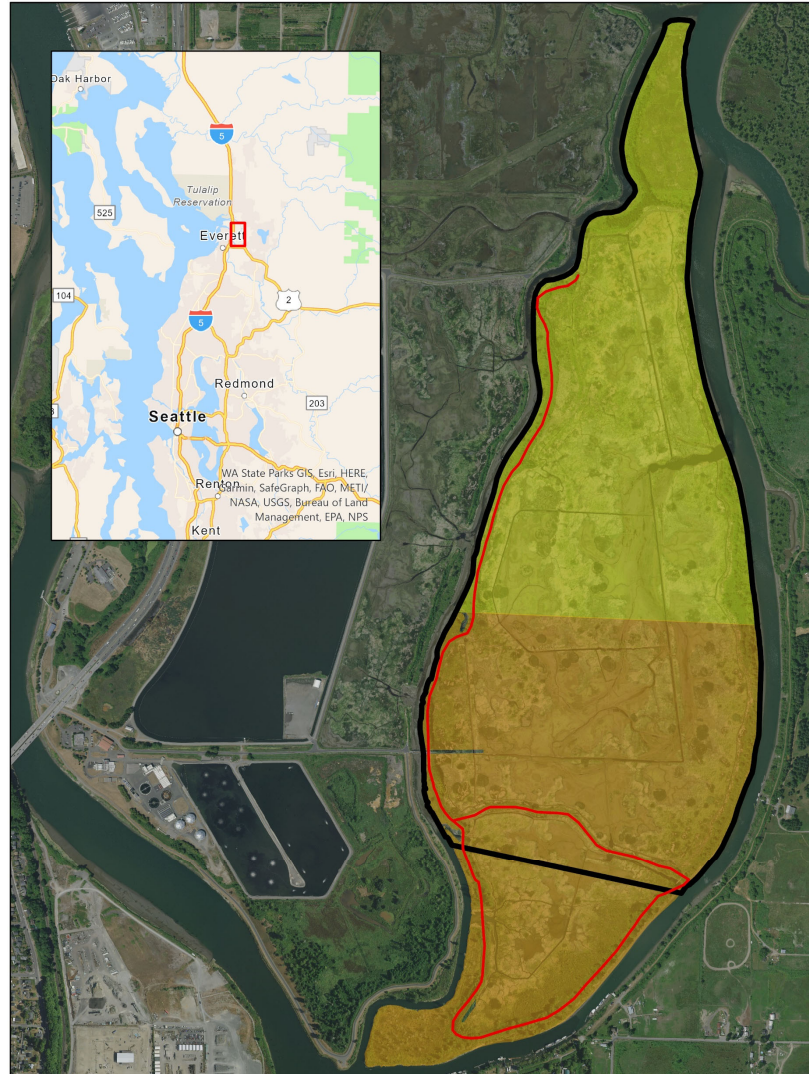
## Mission Statement

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is dedicated to preserving, protecting, and perpetuating the state's fish, wildlife, and ecosystems while providing sustainable fish and wildlife recreational and commercial opportunities.



**Lindsey Desmul**  
**Restoration Project Coordinator, Lands R4**

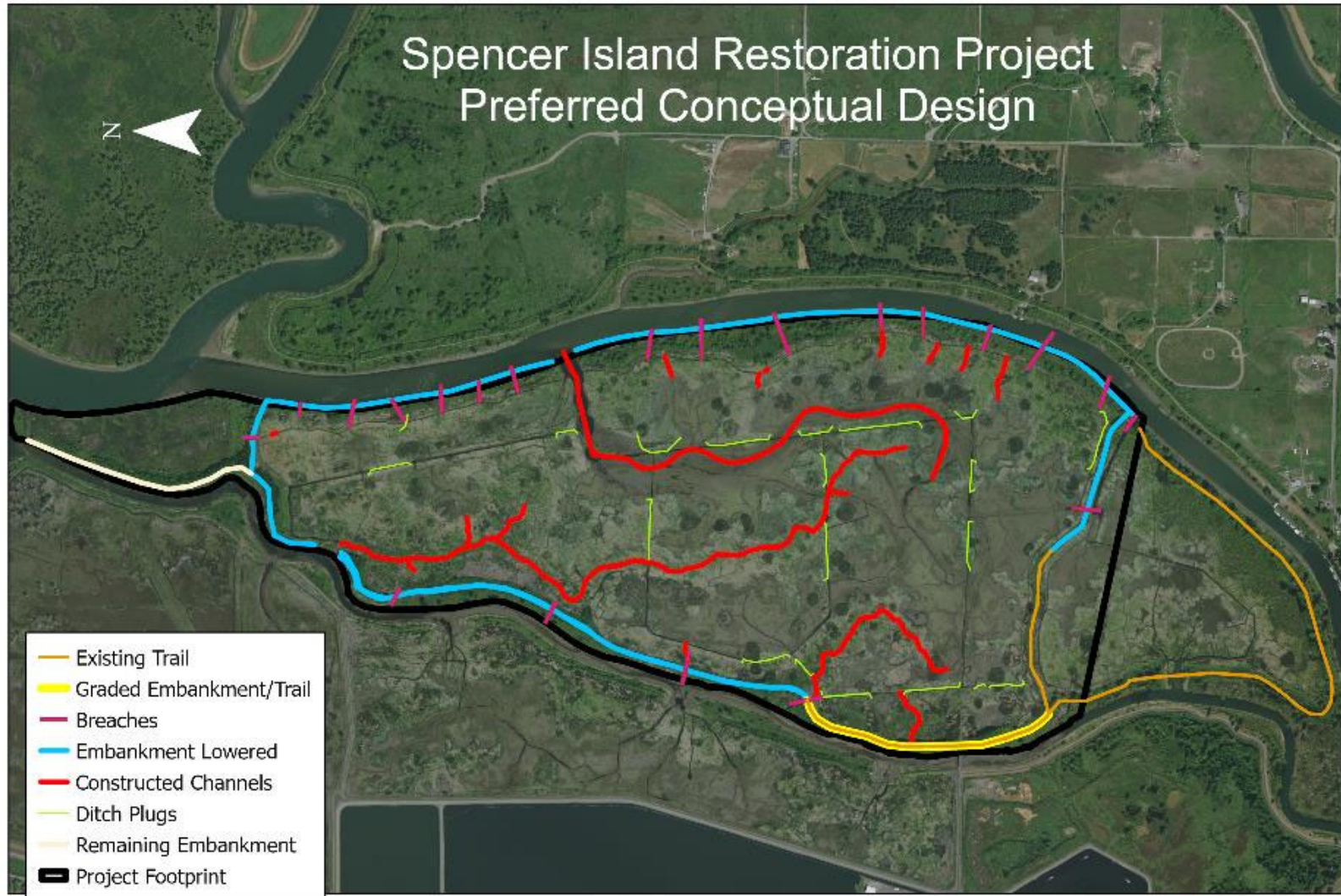
# Spencer Island



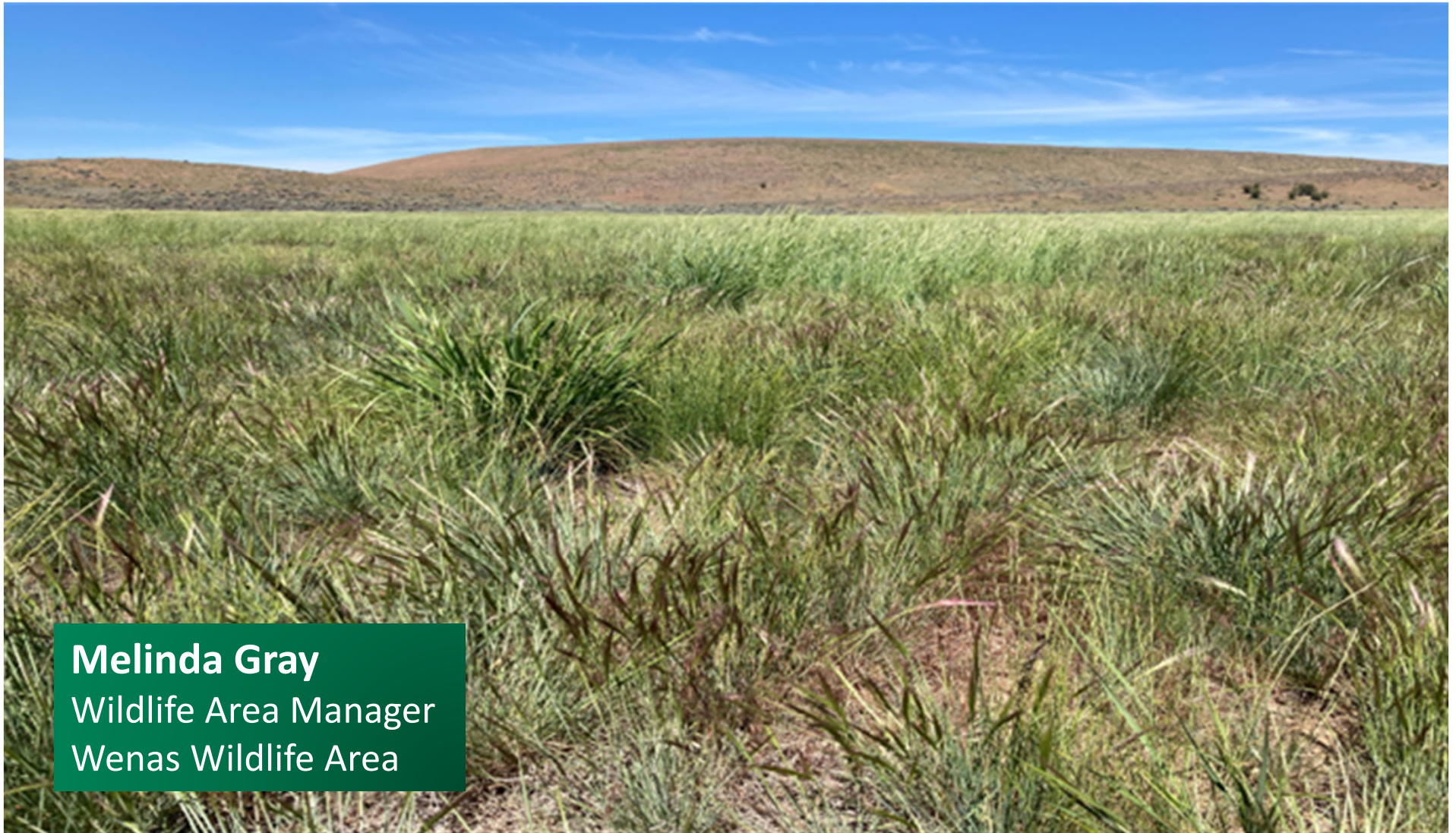




# Spencer Island Restoration Project Preferred Conceptual Design



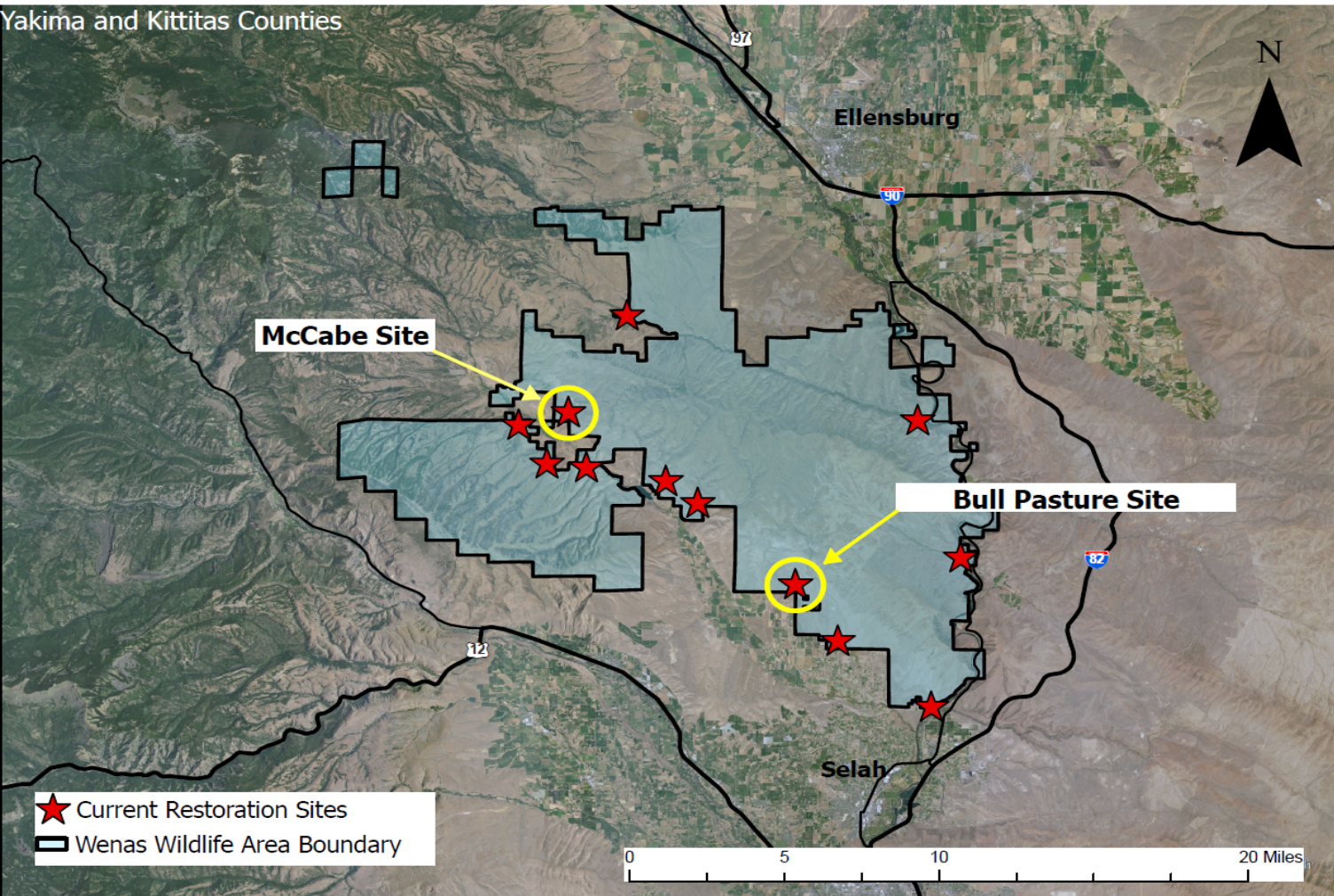
# Wenas Wildlife Area Shrubsteppe Restoration



**Melinda Gray**  
Wildlife Area Manager  
Wenas Wildlife Area



## Wenas Wildlife Area- Current Restoration Sites



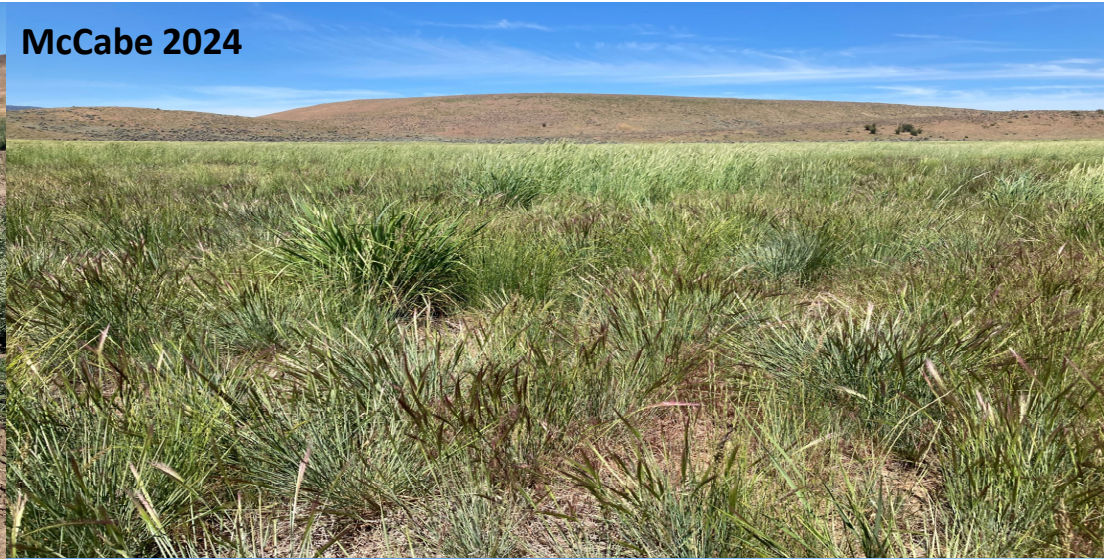
- Approximately 110,000 acres total
- Wildfires in last 5 years burned 67,444 acres
- Wildlife Area Goals:
  - Preserve habitat and species diversity for both fish and wildlife resources
  - Protect and restore native plant populations
  - Provide sustainable fish and wildlife recreational opportunities



**McCabe 2021**



**McCabe 2024**



**Bull Pasture 2021**



**Bull Pasture 2024**







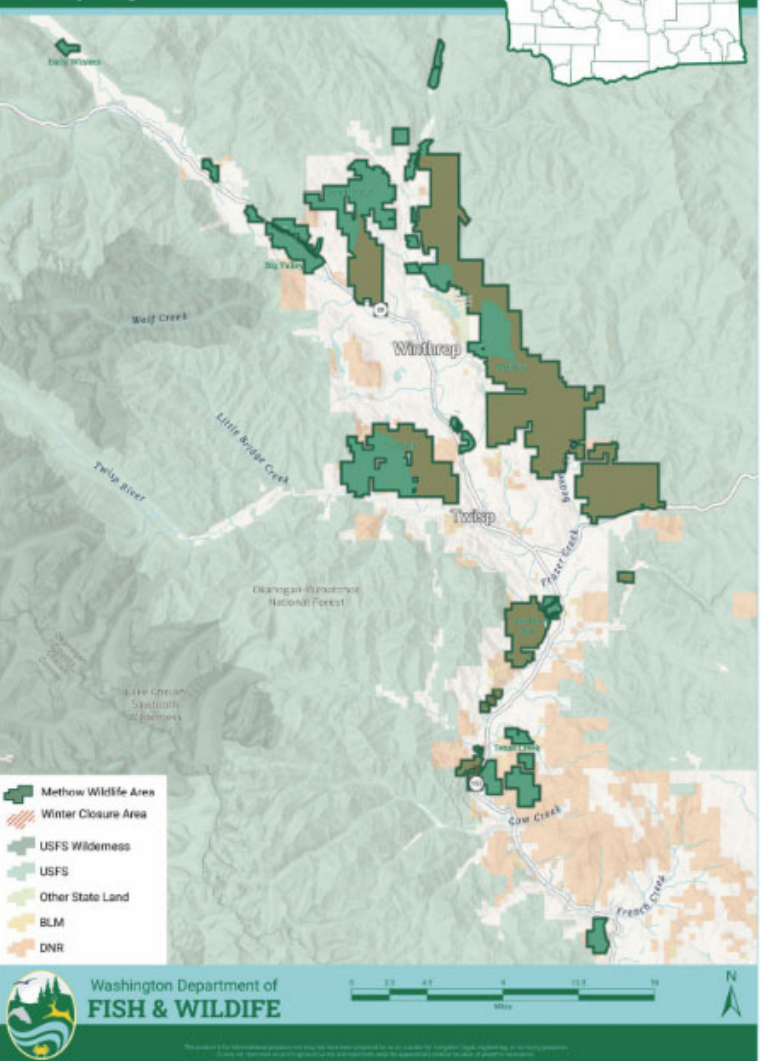
# Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife

## Methow Wildlife Area Winter Range Closure

**Brandon Troyer**  
Assistant Wildlife Program Manager, R2N



Methow Wildlife Area  
Proposed Winter Closure  
Vicinity Map



# Winter Closure Units

- Units Left Open
  - Early Winters
  - Big Valley
  - Hunter Mountain
- Partially Closed:
  - Rendezvous
  - Methow
  - Big Buck
  - Golden Doe
  - Texas Creek



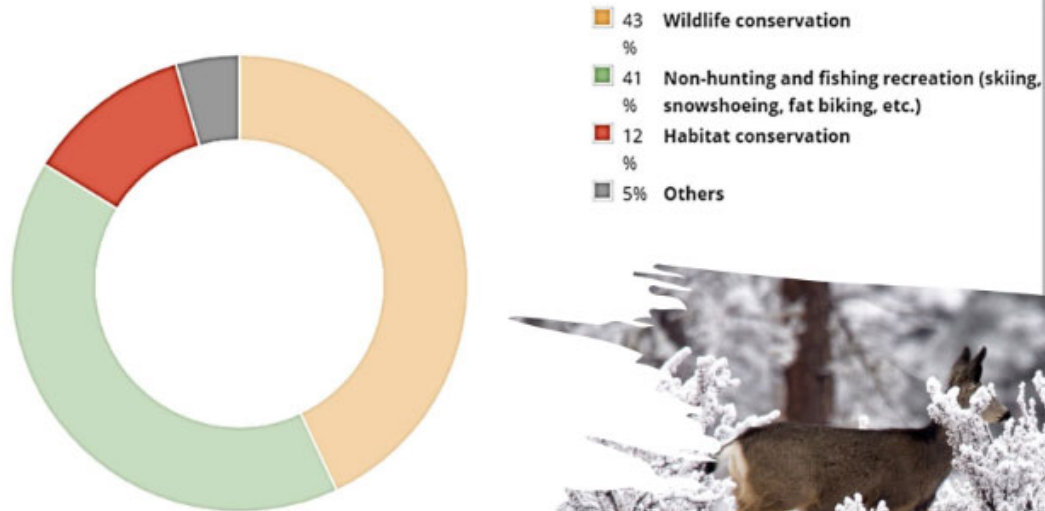


# Winter Closure Process

- 1<sup>st</sup> Internal Discussion w/ Regional Management
  - Keep messaging simple
- Engage WDFW Specialists
  - Game Division (Garrison & Bundick)
- Literature Review and Compilation
- Tribal Consultation
- WAAC Engagement
- County Commissioner Meeting
- Public Outreach, Meetings, and Surveys
- Final Edits to Closure Boundaries
- PAM (Pilot Yr. = 1 time seasonal, resource protection)
- Signs, Cameras, and Closure Implementation

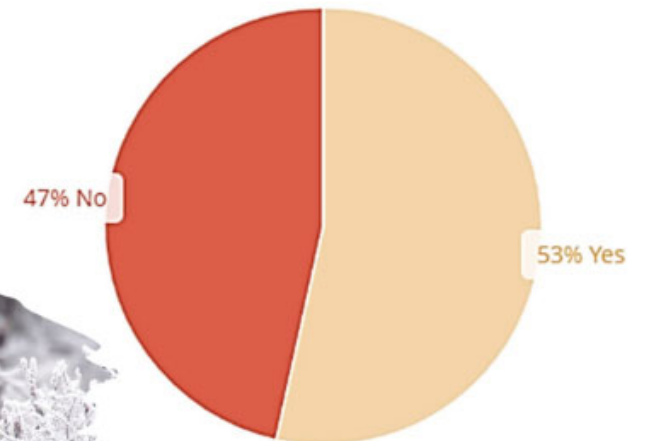
# Challenges & Lessons Learned

What do you most value on the Methow Wildlife Area during the proposed closure dates?



400 respondents

Do you support the proposed winter closure?



391 respondents





»» Methow Valley  
Trails Collaborative



# Successes



# Next Steps

- Review Camera Data
- Internal Discussions / Path Forward
- Tribal Updates and Consultation
  - Previously asked to consider extending the closure
- WAAC Updates and Consultation
- Engage Partners
- Improve Monitoring and Enhance Media Capabilities
- Enhance Public Outreach
- Develop 2024 Closure Plan
  - Options: Seasonal – one-time, Seasonal – Annual (SEPA)







# Discussion

