



Biodiversity Project Examples: Mountains to Sound

Biodiversity is the sum of life in all its forms, including plants, animals, and the habitats they depend on. From the Cascade and Olympic ranges down to Puget Sound, biodiversity includes everything from pinto abalone in rocky reef habitat and kelp ecosystems to fishers and northern spotted owls in subalpine temperate forests.

Key Threats: habitat loss, development, invasive species, pollution, ocean acidification



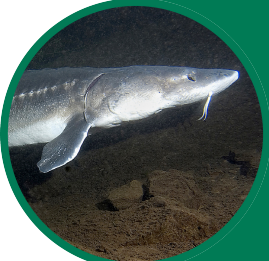
The Department is making the most of Washington's protected places in the North Cascades with **expanded surveys and monitoring efforts to track and understand key wildlife populations** like fisher, white-tailed ptarmigan, Cascade red fox, and northern spotted owl, with new data collected helping to inform ongoing or future conservation actions for these at-risk species.



Pinto abalone restoration efforts are hitting all-time highs thanks to an expanded dive team, improved equipment, and increased collaboration – in the last year alone, more than 12,500 abalone representing 22 genetically distinct families were outplanted across 18 recovery sites in the Salish Sea, bringing total outplant numbers to **more than 60,000 abalone across 37 recovery sites**. WDFW, Puget Sound Restoration Fund, and other partners are paving the path towards recovery of this critical marine shellfish species.



Increased movement of oil tankers and ships moving through the Salish Sea presents an immense risk to Southern Resident Killer Whales and broader marine ecosystems in Puget Sound. An additional Oil Spill Team member has enabled WDFW to participate in more plans and research to protect whales, as well as a pilot training program for **killer whale deterrence during oil spills**.



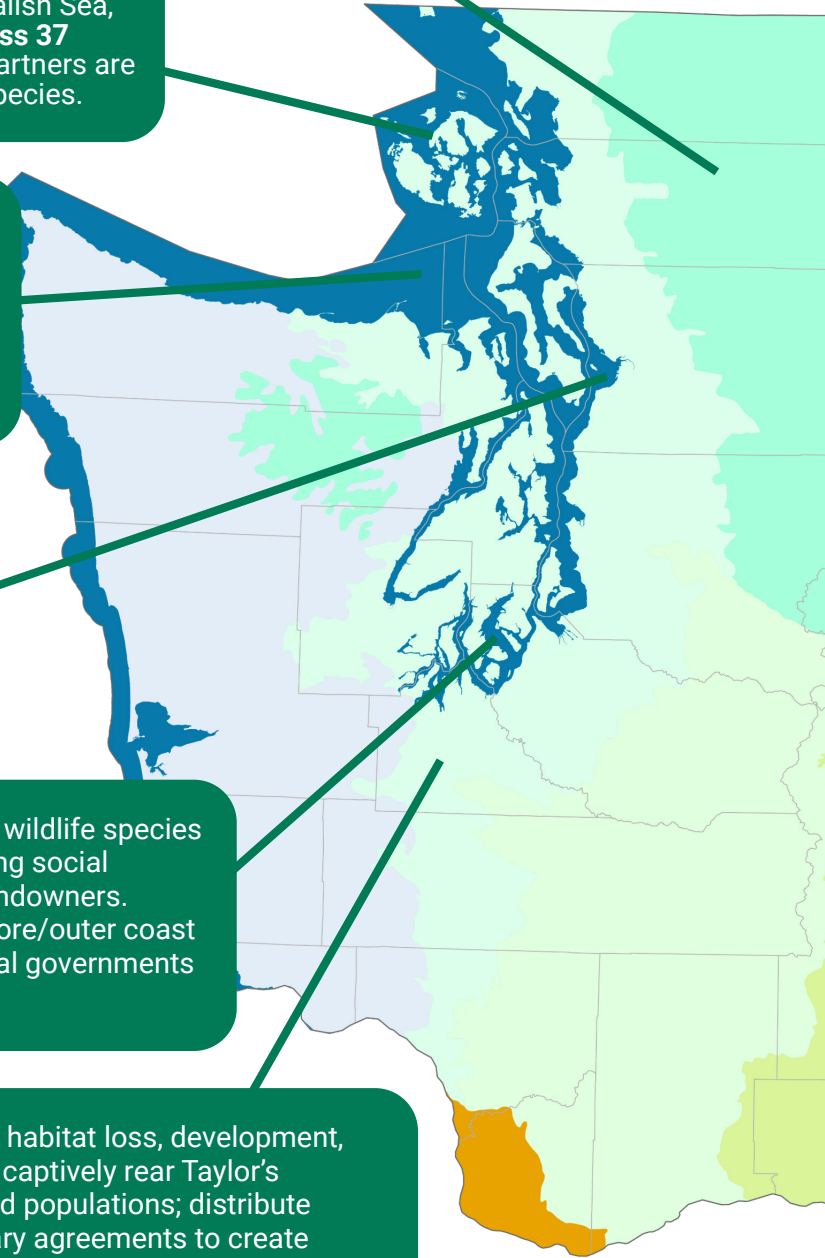
In Puget Sound and coastal waterways, WDFW scientists are conducting **surveys of white sturgeon populations** for the first time. This work will directly contribute to the overall conservation and management of sturgeon, which have connected populations from the Fraser River through Puget Sound and into the Columbia River.

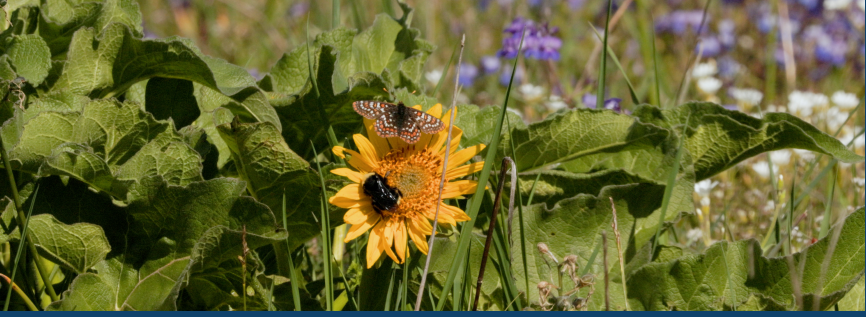


Puget Sound shorelines serve as important habitat for many fish and wildlife species but continue to experience development pressure. WDFW is conducting social marketing surveys to ensure effective assistance and incentives to landowners. Additionally, the agency hired a shoreline policy strategist and nearshore/outer coast habitat lead, both helping to update and refine WDFW guidance to local governments and landowners on **shoreline stewardship and protection**.



Westside prairie habitats and their species are imperiled due to habitat loss, development, and a changing climate. WDFW and partners have been able to **captively rear Taylor's checkerspot and island marble butterflies** to augment small wild populations; distribute island marble host plant seed to landowners enrolled in voluntary agreements to create habitat, as well as surveying for butterfly use of the created habitat; surveying for mardon skipper butterflies in partnership with Joint Base Lewis McChord, and more.





Engaging with and educating the public

Statewide, WDFW has served more than 700 people with biodiversity themed educational materials, events, and workshops. The agency launched an award-winning Washington wildlife lesson, and in just one year, 16% of Washington schools or districts have been exposed to or have adopted all or part of the Wild Washington curriculum. We've also hosted pollinator workshops with housing authorities and Title I schools, helping create school and community pollinator gardens.

The agency developed a public webpage on biodiversity in Washington with helpful information and resources on Washington's biodiversity, wildlife, ecoregions, and how Washingtonians can get involved to help protect and restore biodiversity. WDFW has also produced 23 videos highlighting biodiversity projects and concepts, with more than half a million combined views.

Wildlife Diversity Grant Program



To support the biodiversity work of partners, WDFW successfully established a Wildlife Diversity Grant program, designed to fund recovery actions for a suite of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). In the first year alone, this program funded 17 different projects for a total of \$1.1 million.

Projects in Western Washington include:

- long-term monitoring of at-risk bumblebees
- at-risk butterfly assessments;
- invasive bullfrog population control to benefit the northwestern pond turtle
- bat population and habitat surveys
- monitoring of western snowy plover and streaked horned larks in dune habitat
- shell disease assessments for northwestern pond turtle

Photo credits (left to right, top to bottom):

Front page: San Juan Islands, WDFW; Pinto abalone, WDFW; Fisher monitoring, WDFW; Southern Resident Killer Whales, Dante Aubert; White sturgeon, ODFW; Puget Sound shoreline, WDFW; Westside prairie, WDFW
Back page: Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, WDFW; Habitat at Home, WDFW; Skokomish River Delta, WDFW; Western bumblebee, Xerces Society; Northwestern pond turtle, WDFW; Western snowy plover, WDFW

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